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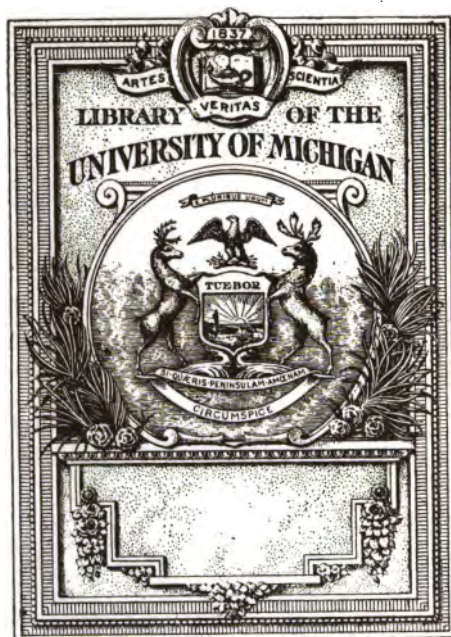
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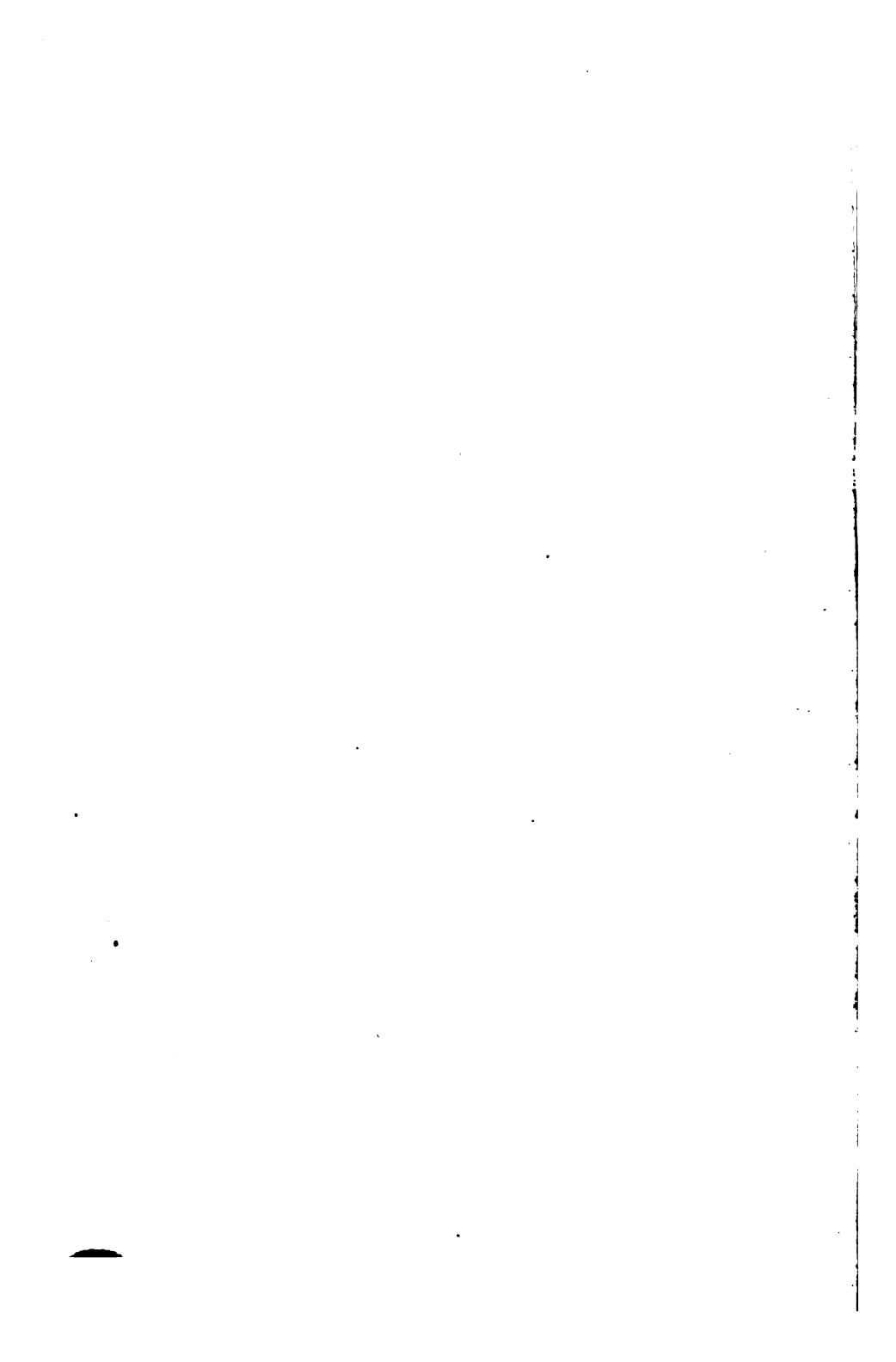
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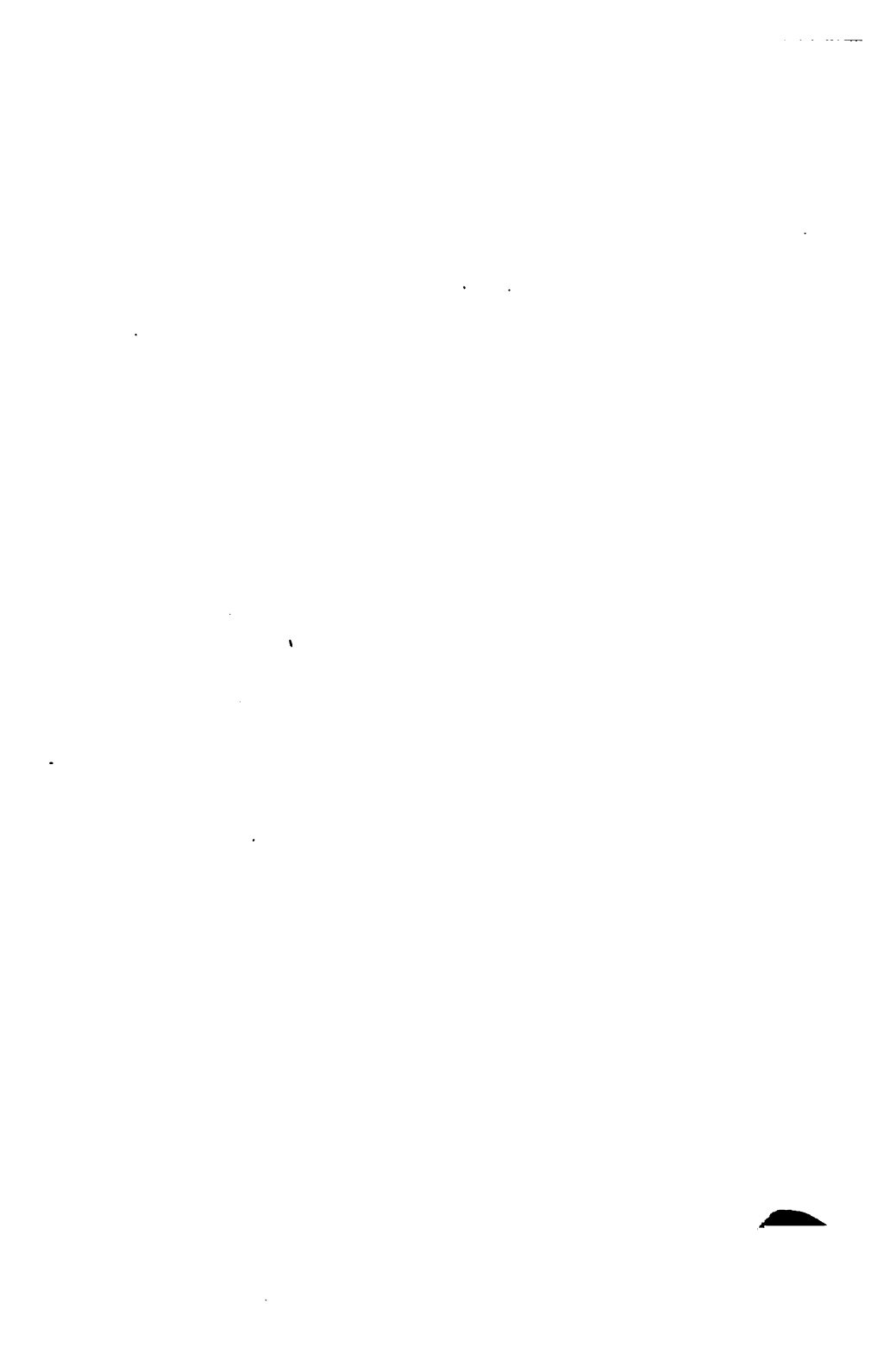
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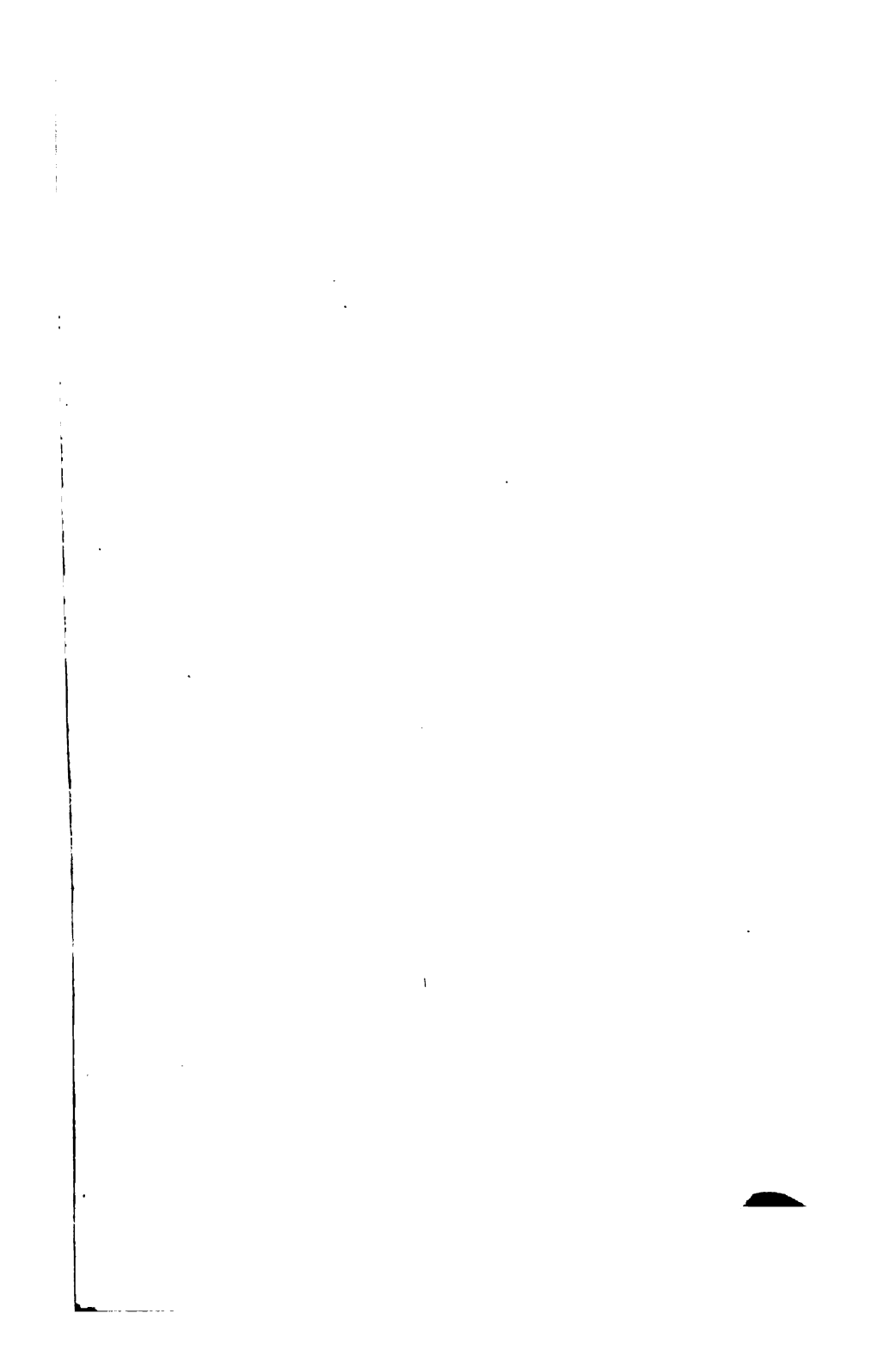
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828
R325







BY MYRTLE REED.

LOVE LETTERS OF A MUSICIAN.

LATER LOVE LETTERS OF A MUSICIAN.

THE SPINSTER BOOK.

LAVENDER AND OLD LACE.

PICKABACK SONGS.

THE SHADOW OF VICTORY.

THE MASTER'S VIOLIN.

THE BOOK OF CLEVER BEASTS.

AT THE SIGN OF THE JACK-O'-LANTERN.

A SPINNER IN THE SUN.

LOVE AFFAIRS OF LITERARY MEN.

44



1811

Percy Bysshe Shelley

Mary Shelley



LOVE AFFAIRS
— or —
LITERARY MEN

By
MYRTLE REED



G. P. PUTNAM'S SONS
New York and London
The Knickerbocker Press
1907



Study

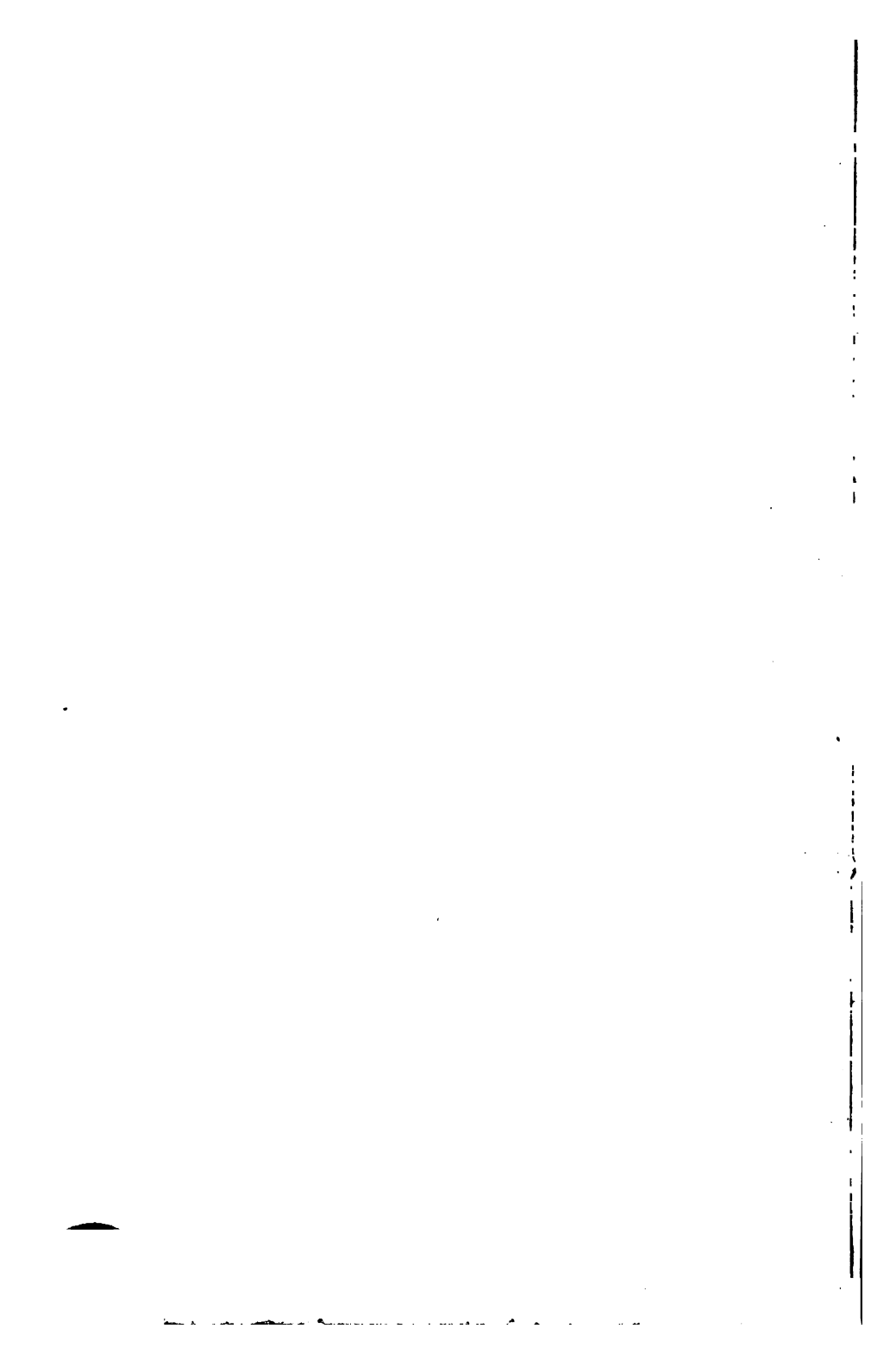


LOVE AFFAIRS
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Jonathan Swift

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Jonathan Swift

SWIFT wrote to Lord Bolingbroke: "I remember, when I was a little boy, I felt a great fish at the end of my line, which I drew up almost on the ground; but it dropped in, and the disappointment vexes me to this very day, and I believe it was the type of all my future disappointments."

The experience is a common one, but, unfortunately, there are few of us who take it so much to heart, and at the distance of two centuries it is difficult to believe that Swift's life was made up entirely of disappointments.

While he was at the University he decided never to marry, as many a youth has done before and since his time. Like the others, he changed his mind, in the due course of events, and sought the hand of Jane Waring, the sister of a college chum.

With his characteristic fondness for changing the names of women, he addressed Miss Waring

The Vegetations of
Fishing

4	Love Affairs of Literary Men
Jonathan Swift	<p>as "Varina." It seems that she did not wish to accept or refuse without due consideration, and therefore dallied with her lover, as is the way of woman.</p> <p>The letter he sent her, urging her to accept him, is certainly a strange missive to be classed as a "love letter." It reads, in part, as follows:</p> <p>"MADAM:</p> <p>"Impatience is the most inseparable quality of a lover. In my case there are some circumstances which will admit pardon for more than ordinary disquiets. That dearest object, upon which all my prospect of happiness entirely depends, is in perpetual danger to be removed forever from my sight. . . .</p> <p>"You have had time enough to consider my last letter and to form your own resolutions upon it. I wait your answer with a world of impatience. I desire nothing of your fortune; you shall live where and with whom you please, till my affairs are settled to your desire. . . .</p> <p>"Would to Heaven you were for a while sensible of the thoughts into which my present distraction plunges me. It is so, by Heaven! The love of Varina is of more tragical con-</p>



Jonathan Swift



Esther Johnson

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<p>sequence than her cruelty. Would to God you had treated and scorned me from the beginning. It was your pity opened the first way to my misfortune, and now your love is finishing my ruin, and it is so then.</p> <p>“In one fortnight I must take eternal farewell of Varina, and I wonder will she weep at the parting a little to justify her poor pretence of affection to me?</p> <p>“By Heaven, Varina, you are more experienced and have less virgin innocence than I. Would not your conduct make one think you were highly skilled in all the little, polite methods of intrigue? Love, with the gall of too much discretion, is a thousand times worse than with none at all. It is a peculiar part of nature which art debauches but cannot improve. . . .</p> <p>“The little disguises and affected contradictions of your sex were all, to say the truth, infinitely beneath persons of your pride and mine, paltry maxims that they are, calculated for the rabble of humanity.</p> <p>“Farewell, madam; and may love make you a while forget your temper to do me justice. Only remember that if you still refuse to be</p>	<p>Love and Discretion</p>

6	Love Affairs of Literary Men
Jonathan Swift	<p data-bbox="329 263 873 331">mine you will quickly lose him that has resolved to die as he has lived,</p> <p data-bbox="490 339 624 371">"All yours,</p> <p data-bbox="668 376 844 408">"JON. SWIFT."</p> <p data-bbox="329 413 873 630">Miss Waring's response to this imperious wooing is not recorded, but, at any rate, Swift went away. Four years later Varina began to think more kindly of him, and wrote to him, intimating that she had reconsidered her harsh decision.</p> <p data-bbox="329 638 873 707">Swift's reply was absolutely brutal. He writes:</p> <p data-bbox="329 715 873 1157">"Are you in a condition to manage domestic affairs with an income of less than three hundred pounds a year? Have you such an inclination to my person and humour as to comply with my desires and way of living, and endeavour to make us both as happy as you can? Will you be ready to engage in those methods I shall direct for the improvement of your mind, so as to make us entertaining company for each other, without being miserable when we are neither visiting nor visited? . . .</p> <p data-bbox="329 1165 873 1233">"Have you so much good-nature as to endeavour by soft words to smooth any</p>

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<p>rugged humour caused by cross accidents of life? . . .</p> <p>“In short, these are some of the necessary methods to please men who, like me, are deep-read in the world; and to a person thus made I should be proud in giving all due returns toward making her happy. These are the questions I have always resolved to propose to her with whom I meant to pass my life; and whenever you can heartily answer them in the affirmative, I shall be blessed to have you in my arms, without regarding whether your person be beautiful, or your fortune large. Cleanliness, in the first, and competency in the other, is all I look for.”</p> <p>It is difficult to imagine a more insidious insult than this. Needless to say, Varina declined the honour thus proffered by “him that has resolved to die as he has lived, all yours.” If she lived to know the sufferings of Stella and Vanessa, she was undoubtedly glad that she escaped.</p> <p>Stella’s real name was Esther Johnson. Her mother was the companion of Lady Giffard, the sister of Sir William Temple, and while Swift was Sir William’s secretary he</p>	<p>Varina Declines the Honour</p>

Jonathan
Swift

became acquainted with the little girl, and taught her to write.

She was eight years old when he first saw her, and at fifteen "was looked upon as one of the most beautiful, agreeable, and graceful young women in London." Her attachment to Swift was lifelong, and his *Journal to Stella* consists of letters written to her.

Parts of the letters are unintelligible, owing to the peculiar language which Swift invented for the purpose. Not content with changing Esther to Stella, he masquerades under the name "Presto." One of his biographers has made an heroic attempt to solve the cipher, with questionable success.

"Pdfr," or "Podefar," according to Mr. Forster, means, "poor, dear, foolish rogue." "Ppt" is, supposedly, "Poppet." "MD" is interpreted as "My dear." "FW" is translated into "Farewell." "Lele," "Sollale," and "Figgarkick Solly" are said to have "meanings not wholly discoverable."

When Sir William Temple died, Stella was left without a home. Swift suggested that she could live in Ireland more cheaply than in England, and she went to Dublin with Mrs.

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<p>Dingley, occupying Swift's apartments in his absence. Swift was thirty-four and Stella was twenty. There was gossip, of course, but nothing to the discredit of either has ever been proved.</p> <p>Swift wrote nearly every day in the <i>Journal to Stella</i>, giving her a faithful account of the day's doings, and often expressing tenderest affection. The first letter in the <i>Journal</i> closes thus: "The post is just come from London and just going out, so I have only time to pray to God to bless poor little MD, MD, MD, MD, MD, MD, MD, MD."</p> <p>In another letter he says:</p> <p>"Parvisol tells me he can sell your horse. Sell it with a pox? Pray let him know that he shall sell his soul as soon. What? sell anything that Stella loves and may sometimes ride? It is hers, and let her do as she pleases: pray let him know this by the first that you know goes to Trim. Let him sell my gray and be hanged."</p> <p>Other extracts from the <i>Journal</i> fully prove his deep regard for Stella. For instance:</p> <p>"Yes, faith, I hope in God Presto and MD will be together this time twelvemonth; what then? Last year, I suppose, I was at Laracor,</p>	<p>The "Journal to Stella"</p>

10	Love Affairs of Literary Men
Jonatban Swift	<p>but next I hope to eat my Michaelmas goose at my little goose's lodgings. . . . God be thanked for Stella's eyes mending; and God send it holds; but, faith, you write too much at a time; better write less or write it at ten times. . . . Faith, it was from my own dear little MD, No. 10. 0, but will not answer it now, no, nooooooh, I will keep it between the two sheets, here it is, just under: O, I lifted up the sheets and saw it there; lie still, you shall not be answered yet, little letter; for I must go to bed and take care of my head. . . . I will be expecting every day a pretty dear letter from my own MD and hope to hear that Stella has been much better in her head and eyes. . . . This goes to-morrow and I have no room but to bid my dearest little MD good night. . . . God Almighty bless poor little Stella, and send her a great many birthdays all happy and healthy and wealthy, and with me ever together, and never asunder again unless by chance. . . . Do you know that every syllable I write I hold my lips just for all the world as if I were talking in our own little language to MD. Faith I am very silly, but I can't help it for my life."</p>

Jonathan Swift	II
<p>And again:</p> <p>"See how this is all blotted; I can write no more here but tell you I love MD dearly. . . . Presto is so silly to-night; yes, he be, but Presto loves MD dearly, as hope saved. . . . You live ten times happier than I; but I should live ten times happier than you if I were with MD. . . . God Almighty bless and preserve dearest little MD. . . . Farewell, dearest MD, and love Presto, who loves MD infinitely above all earthly things, and who will. . . . Farewell, my own dearest MD. . . . Farewell, dearest hearts and souls, MD, MD, MD. . . . Farewell, dearest, ten thousand times dearest, MD."</p> <p>In the <i>Journal</i> he says, no less than fifty times, "I dined to-day with Mrs. Vanhomrigh," and yet there is never the slightest allusion to Vanessa.</p> <p>Hester Vanhomrigh was a beautiful, accomplished, and wealthy young woman, of whom Swift said there was "nothing ugly about her but her name." According to his habit he changed this to Vanessa.</p> <p>It is certain that she loved him, and one finds it hard to excuse his conduct. He kept</p>	<p>"Farewell, Dearest Little MD"</p>

Jonatban
Swift

Stella and Vanessa in ignorance of each other, wrote to both, and in the long poem, *Cadenus and Vanessa*, he gives an account of his feeling which is apparently sincere.

Vanessa was ten years younger than Stella, and Swift was forty-four. If he did not love her, yet he allowed himself to be loved, and evidently enjoyed the state of affairs. One letter reads:

"I promised to write to you, and I have let you know that it is impossible for anybody to have more acknowledgments at heart for all your kindness and generosity to me. . . . I will ride but little every day, and I will write a common letter to you all from some of my stages, but directed to you. . . . Pray God preserve you, and make you happy and easy, and so adieu, brat."

In another letter, he says:

"If you write as you do, I shall come the seldomer, on purpose to be pleased with your letters, which I never look into without wondering how a brat who cannot read can possibly write so well. . . . For the rest, you need make use of no other black art besides your ink. 'T is a pity your eyes are not black

Jonatban Swift	13
<p>or I would have said the same of them; but you are a white witch and can do no mischief."</p> <p>His love of secrecy is shown in still another letter, which is written in this fashion:</p> <p>"If you knew how many little difficulties there are in sending letters to you, it would remove five parts in six of your quarrel; but since you lay hold of my promises, and are so exact to the day, I shall promise you no more, and rather choose to be better than my word than worse. . . . I wish your letters were as difficult as mine, for then they would be of no consequence if they were dropt by careless messengers. A stroke—thus—signifies every-thing that may be said to Cad, at the beginning or conclusion. It is I who ought to be in a huff, that anything written by Cad should be difficult to Skinage."</p> <p>Poor Vanessa writes to him without restraint; with the reckless passion of a woman blinded with love:</p> <p>"You bid me be easy and you would see me as often as you could. You had better have said as often as you could get the better of your inclination so much, or as often as you remembered there was such a one in the</p>	<p>Vanessa and Stella</p>

Jonathan
Swift

world. If you continue to treat me as you do, you will not be made uneasy by me long.

"It is impossible to describe what I have suffered since I saw you last. I am sure I could have borne the rack much better than those killing words of yours. Sometimes I have resolved to die without seeing you more; but those resolves, to your misfortune, did not last long. For there is something in human nature that prompts one so to find relief in this world. I must give way to it, and beg you would see me, and speak kindly to me, for I am sure you would not condemn any one to suffer what I have done, could you but know it.

"The reason I write to you is because I cannot tell it to you should I see you; for, when I begin to complain, then you are angry, and there is something in your looks so awful that it strikes me dumb.

"Oh, that you may but have so much regard for me left, that this complaint may touch your soul with pity. I say as little as ever I can; did you but know what I thought, I am sure it would move you, and believe that I cannot help telling you this and live."

Jonathan Swift	15
<p>Another of her letters to him is infinitely touching:</p> <p>"Oh, how have you forgot me! You endeavour by severities to force me from you. Nor can I blame you; for with the utmost distress and confusion I behold myself the cause of uneasy reflections to you. Yet I cannot comfort you, but here declare that 't is not in the power of time or accident to lessen the inexpressible passion I have for you.</p> <p>"Put my passion under the utmost restraint, send me as distant from you as the earth will allow, you yet cannot banish those charming ideas which will stick by me while I have the use of memory. Nor is the love I bear you only seated in my soul, for there is not a single atom of my frame that is not blended with it."</p> <p>Death and family troubles soon left Vanessa alone in the world. She went to Ireland, though Swift, for reasons of his own, endeavoured to dissuade her. She took up her abode in a town which was too near Stella for Swift's peace of mind.</p> <p>There is a strong probability that Swift was secretly married to Stella in 1716, though the evidence is conflicting, and it is certain that</p>	<p>Vanessa Alone in the World</p>

Jonathan
Swift

Stella never lived with him as his wife. According to one story, Swift rushed out of Archbishop King's library one afternoon like one gone mad, and a man who entered immediately afterward found the Archbishop in tears. "You have just met the most unhappy man on earth," said King, "but on the subject of his wretchedness you must never ask a question."

At last rumours of Swift and Stella reached Vanessa, and, unwisely enough, she wrote to Stella, asking whether or not she was married to Swift. According to some accounts, Stella replied that she was; according to others, she made no answer to Vanessa's letter.

But, at any rate, she gave Vanessa's letter to Swift, reproachfully, no doubt. White with rage, Swift rode to Celbridge, entered Vanessa's drawing-room unannounced, threw her letter into her face, and left the room. She never saw him again, and it was, in truth, poor Vanessa's death warrant. She died soon after, but lived long enough to revoke a will in Swift's favour, and divide her property among others.

Upon the old Vanhomrigh estate there was a clump of laurel. Every time Swift came to see her, Vanessa plucked a twig and planted it.

Jonathan Swift	17
<p>Every one took root and flourished, watered, as it was, by the poor girl's tears.</p> <p>By this time Stella was failing. It is said that in the last months of her life Swift offered to acknowledge the marriage, but Stella sorrowfully declined, saying it was too late. He wrote in Latin that Stella must not die in the Deanery, for fear of malicious gossip, and yet he kept one letter an hour, fearing to open it, lest it contain the dreaded news.</p> <p>She lingered, and conscience tortured Swift. Back under the laurel lay Vanessa, and Stella was dying, confessedly broken-hearted.</p> <p>One Sunday evening at midnight, as Swift sat in the gloomy Deanery alone, a note came, saying that Stella had died peacefully at six o'clock:</p> <p>Two nights afterward he wrote:</p> <p>"This is the night of the funeral, which my sickness will not suffer me to attend. It is now nine o'clock at night, and I am removed into another apartment that I may not see the light in the church, which is just over against the window of my bedroom."</p> <p>He sat there alone, aged and sore stricken, while the solemn music of the burial service</p>	<p>The Death of Stella</p>

Jonathan
Swift

swept through nave and transept, and echoed from the stony walls. Later, when the little band of mourners passed out into the churchyard, in the silent wake of her whom Swift had loved, a white, tortured face appeared at the darkened window, then suddenly disappeared.

The lanterns made a ghostly glimmer in the gloom, flitting like will o' the wisps among the tombs, and as the first earth fell upon Stella's coffin, there was a cry in the distance like a strong man in agony.

What mystery was hidden in that new-made grave no one will ever know, yet there with Stella lies what heart Swift had to give. Whatever mistakes he may have made, he suffered much, bearing it alone and bravely, as a man should. He kept none of Stella's letters—there was not so much as a scrap of paper bearing her name. But there was something else, which he could not destroy, a single long tress of silky hair, black as midnight, wrapped in a paper on which he had written: "Only a woman's hair!"

Alexander Pope



Alexander Pope

THAT stern law of compensation, which is not to be defied, seems to be constantly working against a monopoly of happiness. While rearing Spanish castles upon the frail foundation of day dreams we are wont to wish for various things—for wealth, beauty, love, and fame—forgetting that these things are not in themselves happiness, and are not always a means to that desirable end.

When the last word is said, content is a matter of temperament rather than circumstance, and for each earthly blessing the price must inevitably be paid. Mocking Fate seems to demand love as an equivalent for fame, since, for the most part, great men and women have been unhappy in affairs of the heart.

It was the lot of Alexander Pope to go through a long life unloved by women. His place in literature is secure, but there is a pathos about the empty heart which his

Mocking
Fate

Alexander
Dope

polished verse may not make us forget. He was sensitive, irritable, vain, and frequently dishonest; he describes his life as "a long disease," and yet his greatest misfortune was his loveless state. He was, in truth, the seeker who never found.

His mental growth was attained by a series of triumphs over obstacles. That the son of a linen-draper should rise to the companionship of lords and earls by gifts of mind alone was little short of a miracle in the snobbish age in which he lived. He was frequently taunted with his humble origin, and was led to invent a remote and indefinite relationship to a noble family, for which there is no evidence save his unsupported word. Yet at one time he rose above his high-born detractors, when he replied in answer to the sarcasms of Lord Hervey: "I think it enough that my parents, such as they were, never cost me a blush, and that their son, such as he is, never cost them a tear."

His spinal deformity compelled him to wear stays, and he was the victim of incessant headaches, which he traces to his mother in the prologue to one of his satires. In his childhood he was so remarkable for the delicacy of



Alexander Pope

Martha Blount

10

<p style="text-align: center;">Alexander Pope</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">23</p>
<p>his features, and for the sweetness of his voice and disposition, that he was frequently called "the little nightingale."</p> <p>His passion for books developed before he was eight years of age, and with the exception of two or three years of schooling, he educated himself, living like a hermit in Windsor Forest. Such was the man who was to translate the <i>Iliad</i>, and leave an enduring impress upon English letters.</p> <p>His biographers unite in attributing to him a great admiration for Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, who was a famous beauty in her time, and was related to Beaumont and Henry Fielding. Even in her childhood she became so conspicuous for her vivacity and charm that her father, at a meeting of the Kit-Kat Club to choose toasts for the year, proposed her as a candidate.</p> <p>The members objected, as they had not seen her, and her father sent for her to be brought to the tavern, giving orders that she should be dressed in her best. After a little the child appeared, radiant with excitement, and was received with acclamation. The club drank to her health, and the name of the</p>	<p>Early Passion for Books</p>

Alexander
Pope

eight-year-old "toast" was duly engraved upon a glass.

Lady Mary had a will and a temper of her own, and refused to go to school. She was fond of books, but chafed at discipline and restrictions, so that her education, like Pope's, consisted mainly of miscellaneous reading.

In the height of her girlish beauty she was seen by Mr. Montagu, a grandson of the Earl of Sandwich, who shortly proposed marriage. He was accepted, but a difficulty arose about the marriage settlements, and Lady Mary's father, the Earl of Kingston, broke the engagement, and ordered her to accept another suitor.

Having once made up her mind she seems to have found it difficult to change it at her father's command, for she kept up a private correspondence with Mr. Montagu. Her father ordered her clothes and appointed her marriage day, but while the bridegroom-elect was buying the wedding ring she was quietly married to Mr. Montagu in another part of the town.

Her choice was not fortunate, however. Her husband was staid and ceremonious and undoubtedly dull. He was completely eclipsed

by his wife, and naturally grew resentful. There is no record of an open breach, but she soon left England for the Continent. They parted on good terms, and continued to correspond, but Lady Mary never returned to England until after her husband's death, twenty-two years later. They were together, however, for a short time during Mr. Montagu's embassy to Constantinople.

Lady Mary

When or where the poet met her is uncertain, but they had a long correspondence. She admired his genius, and was proud of his attentions, as well she might be, but she evidently did not regard him as a lover.

His letters to her are formal, stately, and abounding in compliment, as was the fashion of the time. Most of them begin, simply: "Madam." None of them are essentially love letters, and there are few betrayals of any feeling aside from warm and admiring friendship. For instance, he writes to her thus:

"MADAM:

"If to live in the memory of others have anything desirable in it, it is what you possess with regard to me in the highest sense of the

Alexander
Pope

words. There is not a day in which your figure does not appear before me, your conversation return to my thoughts; and every scene, place, or occasion where I have enjoyed them, are as livelily painted as an imagination equally warm and tender can be capable to represent them. . . . My eyesight is grown so bad that I have left off all correspondence except with yourself; in which methinks I am like those people who abandon and abstract themselves from all that are about them (with whom they might have business and intercourse), to employ their addresses only to invisible and distant beings whose good offices and favours cannot reach them in a long time if at all. If I hear from you, I look upon it as little less than a miracle, or extraordinary visitation from another world; it is a sort of dream of an agreeable thing which subsists no more to me; but, however, it is such a dream as exceeds most of the dull realities of my life. . . . For God's sake, madam, send to me as often as you can; in the dependence that there is no man breathing more constantly or more anxiously mindful of you! Tell me that you are well, tell me that your little son is well,

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<p>tell me that your very dog (if you have one) is well."</p> <p>One may easily fancy that the author read this letter several times after it was finished, thought it rather a neat bit of writing, de-patched it—and forgot it. For real feeling contrast it with a part of one of his letters to Dean Swift:</p> <p>"I am daily expecting the end of my life. . . . While I have any ability to hold converse with you, I will never be silent. . . . I love no man so well. . . . Farewell, my dearest and almost only constant friend."</p> <p>And again:</p> <p>"I am, my dearest friend, yours entirely as long as I can write or speak or think."</p> <p>There is a tenderness in this which Pope does not seem to have had for any woman.</p> <p>During one of his frequent illnesses he writes to Lady Mary like a peevish, fretful child:</p> <p>"I might be dead, or you in Yorkshire, for anything that I am the better for your being in town. I have been sick ever since I saw you last, and have now a swelled face and very bad. Nothing will do me as much good as the sight of dear Lady Mary. When you come this</p>	<p>Letter to Swift</p>

28	Love Affairs of Literary Men
Alexander Pope	<p>way, let me see you, for indeed I love you."</p> <p>Another letter to Lady Mary is, perhaps, the most characteristic of all:</p> <p>"MADAM:</p> <p>"After having dreamed of you several nights, besides a hundred reveries by day, I find it necessary to relieve myself by writing, though this is the fourth letter I have sent.</p> <p>"For God's sake, madam, let not my correspondence be like a traffic with the grave from whence there is no return! Unless you write to me, my wishes must be like a poor papist's devotions to separate spirits, who, for all they know or hear of them, either may or may not be sensible of their addresses.</p> <p>"None but your guardian angels can have you more constantly in mind than I; and if they have, it is only because they can see you always. If ever you think of those fine young beaux of Heaven, I beg you to reflect that you have just as much consolation from them as I have at present from you."</p> <p>After the death of Mr. Montagu, Lady Mary returned to England. Pope persuaded her to take up her residence in Twickenham, and</p>

found a suitable house for her. He also arranged to have her portrait painted by Sir Godfrey Kneller. About this time the poet's long friendship took on a warmer tinge, and in reply to a congratulatory letter written him by Gay, he sent some stanzas which alluded to the return of Lady Mary in terms of great affection.

Shortly afterward their friendly relations were abruptly severed, and Lady Mary's own statement as to the cause of the trouble is the only solution of the enigma which appears credible. She says that at an inappropriate time, when she least expected "what romances call a declaration, he made such passionate love to me that, in spite of my attempts to be serious and look angry, I was provoked to an immediate fit of laughter, from which moment he became my implacable enemy."

His humiliation and resentment were overwhelming. His love turned instantly to hatred, as a woman's might; and when he stigmatised one of the profligate female writers of the time, calling her "Sappho," it was generally understood that he referred to Lady Mary, whom he frequently called

Portrait
by Sir
Godfrey
Kneller

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Pope

"Sappho"; but he earnestly denied the imputation.

Shortly afterward he turned his attention to another lady, whom he calls "Errina" in his verses. Probably she was Judith Cowper, an aunt of the poet. He writes of the two in this fashion:

Though sprightly Sappho force our love and praise,
A softer wonder my pleased soul surveys;
The mild Errina, blushing in her bays.
So while the sun's broad beam yet strikes the sight,
All mild appears the moon's more sober light;
Serene in virgin majesty she shines,
And unobserved, the glaring sun declines.

His friendship with the Blount sisters is of much longer duration. It must have begun when he was nineteen or twenty years of age, for he wrote to Teresa Blount, from Bath, in 1714:

"You are to understand, madam, that my passion for your fair self and sister has been divided with the most wonderful regularity in the world. Even from my infancy, I have been in love with one after the other of you, week by week, and my journey to Bath fell out in the three hundred and seventy-sixth week of the reign of my sovereign Lady Sylvia.

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<p>At the present writing hereof it is the three hundred and eighty-ninth week of the reign of your most serene majesty, in whose service I was listed some weeks before I beheld your sister. This information will account for my writing to either of you hereafter, as either shall happen to be queen-regent at that time.”</p> <p>The closing paragraph of this letter is a delicious bit of humour, but is not in the least lover-like:</p> <p>“I could tell you a delightful story of Dr. P., but want room to display it in all its shining circumstances. He had heard it was an excellent cure for love to kiss the aunt of the person beloved, who is generally of years and experience enough to damp the fiercest flame; he tried this course in his passion and kissed Mrs. E—— at Mr. D——’s, but he says it will not do, and that he loves you as much as ever.”</p> <p>For a long time he appears to have divided his affections with the “wonderful regularity” of which he speaks. In the early part of 1717, however, he wrote this letter to Martha Blount:</p> <p>“Let me open my whole heart to you. I have sometimes found myself inclined to be in</p>	<p>Martha Blount</p>

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Pope

love with you, and as I have reason to know from your temper and conduct how miserably I should be used in that circumstance, it is worth my while to avoid it. It is enough to be disagreeable without adding food to it by constant slavery. I have heard indeed of women that have had a kindness for men of my make. . . . I love you so well that I tell you the truth, and that has made me write this letter."

Not long after this there was a quarrel with Teresa Blount, the nature of which is obscure, but it is said to have been caused by her resentment of Pope's offering her an annuity when he learned that she desired to increase her income; for on that very day he wrote:

"It is really a great concern to me that you mistook me so much this morning. I have sincerely an extreme esteem for you; and as you know I am distracted in one respect, for God's sake do not judge and try me by the methods of unreasonable people. Upon the faith of a man who thinks himself not dishonest, I mean no disrespect to you. I have been ever since so troubled by it that I could not help writing the minute I got home."

And, again, some months later, he wrote:

"I am too much out of order to trouble you with a long letter. But I desire to know what is your meaning, to resent my complying with your request and endeavouring to serve you in the way you proposed, as if I had done you some great injury? You told me if such a thing was the secret of my heart, you should entirely forgive and think well of me. I told it and find the contrary. You pretended so much generosity as to offer your service on my behalf. The minute after, you did me as ill an office as you could, in telling the party concerned it was all an amusement, occasioned by my loss of another lady.

"You express yourself desirous of increasing your present income upon life. I proposed the only method I then could find and you encouraged me to proceed in it. When it was done, you received it as if it were an affront; since when I find the very thing in the very manner you wished, and mention it to you, you do not think it worth an answer."

This probably refers to Teresa's sister, Martha, to whom she induced him to propose marriage, that her own obligation to him

Teresa's
Sister

Alexander
Pope

might have some reasonable excuse; but, deeply wounded though he was, he did not permit it to make any difference in his generosity to Teresa. For, a few weeks afterward he executed a deed in her favour, by which he agreed to pay her forty pounds a year for six years, providing she did not marry within that time.

He discontinued his visits, however, and Teresa appears to have written to him, apologising for her conduct and asking him to come again upon the old terms. It is probable that Martha also added an invitation, for his reply is addressed to both:

“LADIES:

“Pray think me sensible of your civility and good meaning in asking me to come to you. You will please to consider that my coming or not is a thing indifferent to both of you. But God knows it is far otherwise to me with respect to both of you. I scarce ever come but one of two things happens, which equally afflicts me to the soul; either I make her uneasy, or I see her unkind. If she has any tenderness, I can only give her every day trouble and melancholy. If she has none, the

daily sight of so undeserved a coldness must wound me to the death. It is forcing one of us to do a very hard and unjust thing to the other. My continuing to see you will, by turns, tease all of us. My staying away can at worst be of ill consequence only to myself. And if one of us is to be sacrificed, I believe we are all three agreed who shall be the person."

Time finally brought a partial reconciliation; but, as regards the poet and Teresa, the wound was never completely healed, and later on he came to think of her as one of his bitterest enemies.

His feeling for Martha Blount was more nearly like love than any affection he ever knew. Even while he was corresponding with Lady Mary he did not forget her:

"I am here studying ten hours a day, but thinking of you in spite of all the learned. The *Epistle of Eloisa* grows warm and begins to have some breathings of the heart in it, which may make posterity think I was in love. I can scarce find it in my heart to leave out the conclusion I once intended for it."

At one time, when she was ill, he wrote to Teresa, saying:

The
Epistle of
Eloisa

Alexander
Pope

"A month ago I should have laughed at any one who told me my heart would be perpetually beating for a lady that was thirty miles off from me. And, indeed, I never imagined my concern would be half so great for any young woman to whom I have been no more obliged than to so innocent an one as she. . . . I cannot be so good a Christian as to be willing to resign my own happiness here for hers in another life. I do more than wish for her safety, for every wish I make I find immediately changed into prayer, and a more fervent one than I had learned to make till now."

Sincerity like this is not to be found in any of his letters to the brilliant Lady Mary; and, upon the death of his father, he wrote this pathetic little note to Martha, upon a stray scrap of paper:

"My poor Father died last night. Believe, since I do not forget you now, I never shall.

"A. POPE."

When his mother died he also wrote her, saying:

"It is a real truth, that to the last of my moments, the thought of you and the best of my

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<p>wishes for you will attend you, told or untold. I could wish you had once the constancy and resolution to act for yourself; whether before or after I leave you (in the only way I shall ever leave you) you must determine; but reflect that the first would make me as well as yourself happier, the latter could make you only so."</p> <p>A great many constructions have been placed upon this letter, but it probably refers to her home life, which, since her brother's marriage, was known to be unhappy; and another letter seems to furnish proof:</p> <p>"Another reflection pains me, that I have never, since I knew you, been so long separated from you as I now must be. Methinks we live to be more and more strangers, and every year teaches you to live without me. This absence may, I fear, make my return less welcome and less wanted to you than once it seemed even after but a fortnight. . . . My uneasiness of body I can bear; my chief uneasiness of mind is in your regard. You have a temper that would make you easy and beloved (which is all the happiness one needs to wish in this world) and content with</p>	<p>An Unhappy Home Life</p>

Alexander
Pope

moderate things. All your point is not to lose that temper by sacrificing yourself to others, out of a mistaken tenderness, which hurts you and profits not them. And this you must do soon, or it will be too late; habit will make it as hard for you to live independent as for L—— to live out of court."

In this letter he also says:

"Time ought not in reason to diminish friendship when it confirms the truth of it by experience."

And it closes thus:

"Adieu; pray write and be particular about your health."

One needs but to recall Pope's scathing letters to his enemies to be assured that such a man would at all times write what he felt, and that his love letters, such as they are, indicate his exact state of heart and mind. It was the fashion to be in love, and great gallantry was much in vogue; consequently, he endeavoured to follow the current. He was constantly persuading himself that he was in love; but, though he proposed marriage to both Lady Mary Wortley Montagu and Martha Blount, there are no real love poems to be found

in his work, and his letters have neither constant tenderness nor sustained devotion. There is not a single term of endearment in any one of them, unless exception be made of a letter addressed to Martha Blount, which begins: "Most Divine."

And yet, beneath the formal phrases and the stilted compliment, and deeper than the vanity and selfishness which are inseparable from him, is to be felt the eternal hunger and the infinite aspiration—the hands that grope in darkness for the human comfort of hands that are not there.

It is said that during the last days of his life Martha Blount was incredibly unkind to him. Johnson says that as the dying poet was one day sitting outdoors with two of his friends he saw Miss Blount at the bottom of the terrace, and asked Lord Bolingbroke to go and bring her to him. Bolingbroke sat still, but Lord Marchmont delivered the message, to which Miss Blount replied: "What, is he not dead yet?" Afterward she may have regretted her harshness, for he left her the bulk of his estate.

Through his last long illness his friends were continually about him. He was tormented by

The
Cruelty of
Martha
Blount

Alexander
Pope

visions, and by the consciousness of failing mind. "One of the things that I have always most wondered at," he said, "is that there should be any such thing as human vanity. If I had any, I had enough to mortify it a few days ago, for I lost my mind for a whole day."

Unloved of women though he was, he had many friends among men. The attachment between him and Dean Swift was tenderness itself; and Lord Bolingbroke sobbed like a child when, after much suffering, the "long disease" was forever healed.

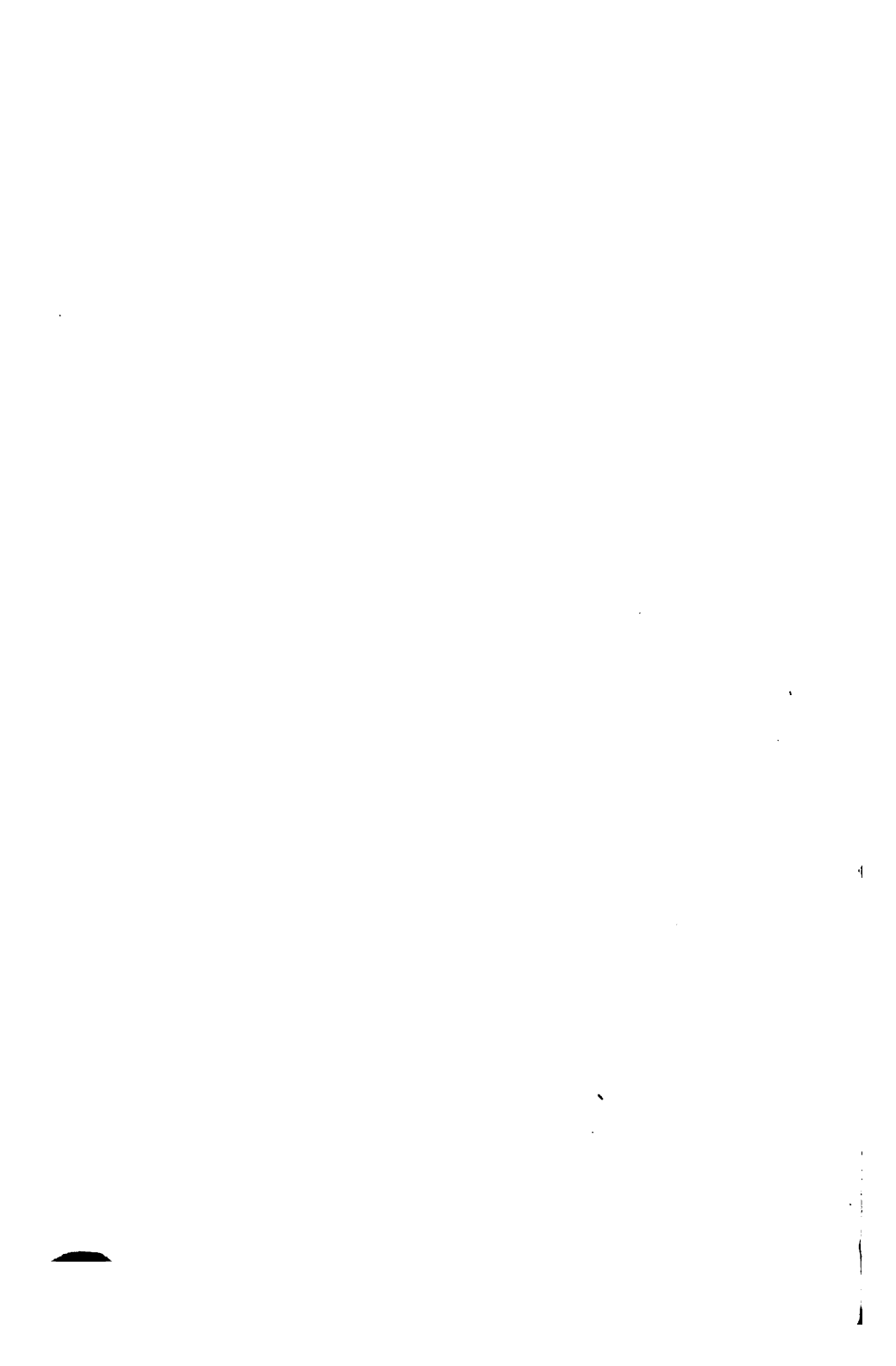
Though Pope's countrymen must ever be grateful to him for the magnificent legacy he has left, it is for us to wonder what a great love might have made of him. His technical facility, the harmony of his verse, his mastery of detail, his imaginative gifts, and his ripe scholarship challenge sincere admiration, even after the lapse of nearly two hundred years. But, perfect as his work is, it is as cold as sculpture, for he knew not the uses of colour and brush.

Had a woman come as a light into his soul, revealing his treasures of sympathy, and shin-

Alexander Pope	41
<p>ing with soft radiance upon his self-knowledge, as great love must ever do, it is not too much to say that he might have stood but a little below Shakespeare, and made the hump on his back, in truth, "the sheath of invisible wings."</p>	<p>Pope and Shakespeare</p>



Samuel Johnson



Samuel Johnson

BOSWELL, that prince of biographers, has credited his famous subject with views upon matrimony which, to say the least, are unusual. "I believe marriages would in general be as happy, and often more so," said Dr. Johnson, "if they were all made by the Lord Chancellor, upon a due consideration of characters and circumstances, without the parties having any choice in the matter."

Yet it is difficult to believe that the Lord Chancellor would have arranged such a marriage for any one as that which the philosopher chose for himself.

When he was an uncouth youth he was in love with a local belle; afterward he was said to have a passion for a certain Molly Aston; and, like Sterne, he must ever have "some Dulcinea in his heart." But his fondness for woman in general was finally centred upon the Widow Porter, who later became his wife.

Marriages
by the Lord
Chancellor

Samuel
Johnson

In spite of the harsh criticisms of Lord Macaulay and David Garrick we may believe that Mrs. Johnson was a handsome woman, since her husband thought her so; and though the Lord Chancellor undoubtedly would not have made an alliance between a widow of forty-eight—with two grown children—and a boy of twenty-six, it was, nevertheless, a happy marriage.

"This is the most sensible man I ever saw in my life," said the Widow Porter to her daughter, Lucy, of whom Johnson was said to have been enamoured until he met her mother. Miss Porter describes her future step-father as "lean and lank, so that his immense structure of bones was hideously striking to the eye, and the scars of the scrofula were visible."

Details of the courtship are lacking, but one fine morning, instead of being married at Birmingham, they went on horseback to Derby. It must have been a strange ride, for in the after years Johnson described it to Boswell in this fashion:

"Sir, she had read the old romances, and had got into her head the fantastical notion that a woman of spirit should use her lover like a dog.



Samuel Johnson



Esther Thrale

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So, sir, at first she told me that I rode too fast, and she could not keep up with me; and when I rode a little slower, she passed me and complained that I lagged behind. I was not to be made the slave of caprice, and I resolved to begin as I mean to end. I therefore pushed on briskly till I was fairly out of sight. The road lay between two hedges, so I was sure she could not miss it, and I contrived that she should come up with me; when she did, I observed her to be in tears."

Betty
and Molly

According to her severe critics Mrs. Johnson was coarse, and addicted to the free use of the rouge pot and powder puff. Her husband undoubtedly overlooked this feminine failing, unless he was unconscious of it, either through the defect in his sight or the magic of the little blind god.

She loved him devotedly, and he occasionally teased her by expressing admiration for other women. "One day," he says, "as a fortune-telling gypsy passed us when we were walking out in company with two or three friends, in the country, she made the wench look at my hand, but soon repented her curiosity; for, says the gypsy, 'Your heart is divided, sir, between a

Samuel
Johnson

Betty and a Molly; Betty loves you best, but you take most delight in Molly's company.' When I turned about to laugh, I saw my wife was crying. Pretty charmer! she had no reason."

Only one of his letters to his wife has been preserved, but this leaves no doubt as to the sincerity and depth of his attachment.

"DEAREST TETTY,

"After hearing that you are in so much danger as I apprehend from a hurt on a tendon, I shall be very uneasy till I know you are recovered, and beg that you will omit nothing that can contribute to it, nor deny yourself anything that may make confinement less melancholy. You have already suffered more than I can bear to reflect upon and I hope more than either of us shall suffer again. One part at least I have often flattered myself we shall avoid for the future, our troubles will surely never separate us more. . . .

"I still promise myself many happy years from your tenderness and affection, which I sometimes hope our misfortunes have not yet deprived me of. . . .

Of the time I have spent from thee, and of

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<p>my dear Lucy and other affairs, my heart will be at ease on Monday to give thee a particular account, especially if a Letter should inform me that thy leg is better, for I hope you do not think so unkindly of me as to imagine that I can be at rest while I believe my dear Tetty in pain.</p> <p>“Be assured, my dear Girl, that I have seen nobody in these rambles, upon which I have been forced, that has not contributed to confirm my esteem and affection for thee, though that esteem and affection only contributed to increase my happiness when I reflected that the most amiable woman in the world was exposed by my means to miseries which I could not relieve. I am, My Charming Love,</p> <p style="text-align: right;">“Yours,</p> <p style="text-align: right;">“SAM. JOHNSON.</p> <p>“Lucy always sends her Duty and my mother her Service.</p> <p>“Jan. 31st, 1739-40.”</p> <p>Her loss was a great shock to him, and in his prayers and meditations there is always evidence of a love which death could not destroy. For instance, under date of April 23, 1753, he writes:</p>	<p>Prayers and Meditations</p>

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Johnson

"I know not whether I do not too much indulge the vain longings of affection, but I hope they internate my heart, and that when I die like my Tetty, this affection will be acknowledged in a happy interview, and that in the meantime I am incited by it to piety. I will, however, not deviate too much from common and received methods of devotion."

He kept her wedding ring in a little round, wooden box. On the inside of the cover he pasted a slip of paper, on which he wrote in small characters:

Eheu !
 Eliz. Johnson,
 Nupta Jul. 9, 1736,
 Mortua ehue !
 Mart. 17, 1752.

In spite of his lifelong fidelity to his Tetty, Boswell records the fact that "he laughed at the notion that a man never can be really in love but once, and considered it as a mere 'romantick fancy.'" In the *Tour to the Hebrides*, there is this entry:

"This evening one of our married ladies, a lively, pretty little woman, good-humouredly sat down upon Dr. Johnson's knee, and, being

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<p>encouraged by some of the company, put her arms round his neck and kissed him. 'Do it again,' said he, 'and let us see who will tire first.' He kept her on his knee some time while he and she drank tea."</p> <p>Yet the light behaviour of a moment is not to count against the years of faithfulness. In 1780 he wrote to Dr. Lawrence:</p> <p>"The loss, dear sir, which you have lately suffered, I felt many years ago, and know therefore how much has been taken from you and how little can be had from consolation. He that outlives a wife whom he has long loved, sees himself disjoined from the only mind that has the same hopes and fears and interest; from the only companion with whom he has shared much good or evil; and with whom he could set his mind at liberty to retrace the past or anticipate the future. The continuity of being is lacerated; the settled course of sentiment and action stopped; and life stands suspended and motionless, till it is driven by external causes into a new channel. But the time of suspense is dreadful."</p> <p>Thirty years after his wife's death, in writing with regard to a stone to be placed on her</p>	<p>Dr. Lawrence</p>

Samuel
Johnson

grave, and enclosing the inscription to be engraved upon it, we find him speaking of her in terms of tenderest affection.

His long friendship with Mr. and Mrs. Thrale is historical. When they met, Johnson was almost sixty and Mrs. Thrale was a pretty, lively young woman of twenty-five. She is said to have been the original of Hogarth's fine painting, *The Lady's Last Stake*, which is well known through engravings.

Mrs. Thrale's marriage was generally considered one of convenience, and it is certain that she stood much in awe of her husband, who was many years her senior. "I know of no man," said Dr. Johnson, "who is so much the master of his wife and family as Thrale."

For seventeen years the pleasant home of his benefactors was his own. His room was always ready, a place was reserved for him at the table, and the carriage was at his disposal to go and come as he might choose. The terrible melancholy to which he was subject was much lessened in this cheerful atmosphere, and his occasional bursts of ill temper were always pardoned.

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<p>He wrote to Mrs. Thrale with great affection. For instance, a letter dated at Edinburgh, November 18, 1773, runs as follows:</p> <p>“MY DEAREST MISTRESS:</p> <p>“This is the last letter that I shall write; while you are reading it, I shall be coming home.</p> <p>“I congratulate you upon your boy, but you must not think that I shall love him all at once as well as I love Harry, for Harry, you know, is rational. I shall love him by degrees.</p> <p>“Poor, pretty, dear Lucy! Can nothing do her good? I am sorry to lose her. But, if she must be taken from us, let us resign her, with confidence, into the hands of Him who knows, and who only knows, what is best for us and her.</p> <p>“Do not suffer yourself to be dejected. Resolution and diligence will supply all that is wanting and all that is lost. But if your health should be impaired, I know not where to find a substitute. I shall have no mistress; Mr. Thrale will have no wife; and the little flock will have no mother.</p> <p>“I long to be home and have taken a place in the coach for Monday. I hope, therefore,</p>	<p>My Dear- est Mis- tress</p>

Samuel
Johnson

to be in London on Friday, the 26th, in the evening. Please to let Mr. Williams know. I am, etc.,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

His tender feeling for Mrs. Thrale increased with time. Four years later he writes to her in this wise:

"DEAR MADAM:

"Yet I do love to hear from you; such pretty, kind letters as you send. But it gives me great delight to find that my master misses me. I begin to wish myself with you more than I should do, if I were wanted less. It is a good thing to stay away till one's company is desired, but not so good to stay after it is desired.

"You know I have some work to do. I did not set to it very soon and if I should go up to London with nothing done, what would be said but that I was—who can tell what? I therefore stay till I can bring up something to stop their mouths & then——

"Though I am still at Ashbourne, I receive your dear letters that come to Lichfield & you continue that direction, for I think to get thither as soon as I can.

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<p>“One of the does died yesterday and I am afraid her fawn will starve; I wish Miss Thrale had it to nurse, but the doctor is now all for cattle and minds very little either does or hens.</p> <p>“How did you and your aunt part? Did you turn her out of doors to begin your journey or did she leave you by her usual shortness of visits? I love to know how you go on.</p> <p>“I cannot but think on your kindness and my master’s. Life has, upon the whole fallen short, very short, of my early expectations; but the acquisition of such a friendship, at such an age, when new friendships are seldom acquired, is something better than the general course of things gives man a right to expect.</p> <p>“I think on it with great delight; I am not very apt to be delighted.</p> <p>“I am, etc.,</p> <p>“SAM. JOHNSON.”</p> <p>After 1782, when Mr. Thrale died of apoplexy, the friendship began to fade, at least upon the part of the lady. She was a charming woman of about forty, with an independent fortune; and since her husband was so much “the master of his wife and family” she doubtless felt her freedom.</p>	<p>The Death of Mr. Thrale</p>

Samuel
Johnson

By degrees, Dr. Johnson was given to understand that his presence in the house was no longer desired; and in the library he composed one of his most pathetic "Meditations," which was in the nature of a farewell to the house where he had enjoyed so much comfort, and to the family that had been so kind to him.

In relation to his long residence with them Mrs. Thrale said: "Veneration for his virtue, reverence for his talents, delight in his conversation, and habitual endurance of a yoke my husband first put upon me, and of which he contentedly bore his share for sixteen or seventeen years, made me go on so long with Mr. Johnson; but the perpetual confinement I will own to have been terrifying in the first years of our friendship, and irksome in the last, nor could I pretend to support it without help when my coadjutor was no more."

All of Mrs. Thrale's friends bitterly opposed her marriage to Mr. Piozzi—an Italian music-teacher residing in London. Dr. Johnson, whose violent objections were presumed to come from intimate personal interest, spoke of him contemptuously as "a foreign fiddler."

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<p>Upon hearing of her intention he wrote to her as follows:</p> <p>"MADAM,—If I interpret your letter right, you are ignominiously married; if it is yet undone, let us once more talk together. If you have abandoned your children and your religion, God forgive your wickedness; if you have forfeited your fame and your country, may your folly do no further mischief. If the last act is yet to do, I who have loved you, esteemed you, revered you, and served you, I, who long thought you the first of womankind, entreat that, before your fate is irrevocable, I may once more see you. I was, I once was, Madam, most truly yours,</p> <p style="text-align: right;">"SAM. JOHNSON.</p> <p>"July 2, 1784.</p> <p>"I will come down, if you permit it."</p> <p>Mrs. Thrale replied to this letter in a way which indicated both anger and wounded pride, forbidding Johnson to come to her, and closing with these words:</p> <p>"Farewell, dear Sir, and accept my best wishes. You have always commanded my esteem, and long enjoyed the fruits of a friendship never infringed by one harsh expression</p>	<p>Mrs. Thrale's Farewell</p>

Samuel
Johnson

on my part during twenty years of familiar talk. Never did I oppose your will or control your wish; nor can your unmerited severity itself lessen my regard; but till you have changed your opinion of Mr. Piozzi, let us converse no more. God bless you!"

The reply to this, Johnson's last letter to Mrs. Thrale, written after her marriage, deserves to stand by itself for its pathetic simplicity.

"DEAR MADAM—What you have done, however I may lament it, I have no pretence to resent, as it has not been injurious to me. I, therefore, breathe out one sigh more of tenderness, perhaps useless, but at least sincere.

"I wish that God may grant you every blessing, that you may be happy in this world for its short continuance, and eternally happy in a better state; and whatever I can contribute to your happiness, I am very ready to repay for the kindness which soothed twenty-years of a life radically wretched.

"Do not think slightly of the advice which I now presume to offer. Prevail upon Mr. Piozzi to settle in England; you may live here with more dignity than in Italy, and with

Samuel Johnson	59
<p>more security; your rank will be higher and your fortune more under your own eye. I desire not to detail my reasons; but every argument of prudence and interest is for England and only some phantoms of imagination seduce you to Italy.</p> <p>"I am afraid, however, that my counsel is vain, yet I have eased my heart by giving it.</p> <p>"When Queen Mary took the resolution of sheltering herself in England, the Archbishop of St. Andrews, attempting to dissuade her, attended her on her journey; and when they came to that irremeable stream that separated the two kingdoms, walked by her side into the water, in the middle of which he seized her bridle, and with earnestness proportioned to her own danger and his own affection pressed her to return. If the parallel reaches thus far, may it go no farther—the tears stand in my eyes.</p> <p>"I am going into Derbyshire and hope to be followed by your good wishes, for I am, with great affection,</p> <p style="text-align: right;">" Yours, etc.,</p> <p style="text-align: right;">"SAMUEL JOHNSON."</p> <p>For over twenty-five years Mrs. Thrale lived</p>	<p>Johnson in Derbyshire</p>

Samuel
Johnson

happily as Mrs. Piozzi; and after his death made herself ridiculous, at eighty, by a passion for a young actor.

Dr. Johnson died not long after his final parting with his old friend, his lifelong horror and fear of death changing to a patient resignation as the last day drew near. Beneath that rough and often bearish exterior was a heart which dwelt lovingly upon women and little children, though he told Boswell that he had never wished to have a child of his own.

Pitifully afflicted with scrofula, and distressed by poverty and frequent illness, much may be forgiven him for the sake of his stern morality, his great soul, and his unspeakably tender heart. Appropriately enough, his last words were to a woman: "God bless you, my dear!"

As often happens with the greatest and best of men, he was peculiarly sensitive to the influence of women. A man capable of leading a regiment in a gallant charge will not infrequently be like wax in the hands of the woman he loves. And so Dr. Johnson, whose biting sarcasm and scathing retorts made men fear him, had at heart only kindness for women.

Samuel Johnson	61
<p>So he passes from us—quip and merry jest, talk of town and tavern, with his fondness for orange-peel and his innumerable cups of tea. It was his to suffer much, and out of great sadness to pluck the lingering bit of sweetness which his high philosophy and his unchanging faith in God well may teach us to find.</p> <p>In thought and in life he was wholly clean; rough and uncouth in manner, but sound and sweet at the core. He lives by force of character rather than by his work, for, in circles where <i>Irene</i> and <i>The Rambler</i> are not read, Boswell's <i>Life of Johnson</i> is known and loved.</p> <p>His biographer has given us not a shadowy personality, but a real man, often effacing himself that Dr. Johnson may be seen as he was. Bitter and impatient though he might be at times, no one was ever more sternly introspective and self-critical than he; none so sorry for a fault, and none so swift to make amends.</p> <p>Because of his deep sincerity, and for the sake of the hidden tenderness which wound through his hard nature like a vein of gold in unyielding quartz, we may forgive the "paint</p>	<p><i>The Rambler</i></p>

62	Love Affairs of Literary Men
Samuel Johnson	<p>an inch thick" on the face of his "Tetty," and find room in our hearts, side by side with him, for the woman he loved.</p>

Laurence Sterne

66	Love Affairs of Literary Men
Laurence Sterne	<p>sidered his first love. The courtship lasted at least two years, for Miss Lumley seems to have kept her ardent lover in suspense, with coquetry and a wisdom that might well have been a leaven in the dreary wastes of marriage.</p> <p>"Love is one of the most A-gitating, B-ewitching, C-onfounded, D-evilish affairs of life—the most E-xtravagant, F-utilious, G-alligaskinish, H-andy-dandyish, and L-yrical of all human passions." So Sterne follows it through the alphabet; and this would seem to indicate that the torment which raged in the breast of the young parson was the genuine manifestation of the miracle.</p> <p>The inevitable separation occurred, and with it the inevitable letter from the bereaved lover.</p> <p>"That hour you left D'Estella," he writes, "I took to my bed, worn out by fevers of all kinds."</p> <p>In speaking of their mutual friend, a "Miss S——," he says: "What can be the cause, my dear L——, that I have never been able to see the face of this mutual friend but I feel myself rent in pieces?"</p> <p>He was induced to stay with "Miss S——" for an hour, during which time he "burst into</p>



Laurence Sterne



Lydia Sterne

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Laurence Sterne	67
<p>tears a dozen times," and was visited "with affectionate gusts of passion." Presently "Miss S—— was constrained to leave the room and sympathise in her dressing-room," so the lover's grief was probably too great to be borne by an outsider.</p> <p>"One solitary plate, one knife, one fork, one glass!" laments Mr. Sterne.</p> <p>"I gave a thousand penetrating looks at the chair thou hadst so often graced, then laid down my knife and fork, and took out my handkerchief and clapped it across my face and wept like a child. I do so this moment, My L.; for as I take up my pen my poor pulse quickens, my pale face glows, and tears are trickling down upon the paper, as I trace the word L."</p> <p>Serious indeed is a passion which obscures man's regard for his dinner!</p> <p>Miss Lumley became very ill, and her lover was deeply concerned. One night as he was sitting at her bedside, she said to him: "My dear Lawry, I can never be yours, for, I verily believe, I have not long to live. But I have left you every shilling of my fortune." Shortly afterward her health began to improve,</p>	<p>Miss Lumley</p>

Laurence
Sterne

and in 1741 they were married in the cathedral.

The expected happiness was of short duration. It is possible that Mr. Sterne was no more fitted for marriage than for the ministry. He himself greatly marvelled that "Nature, who makes everything so well to answer its destination, and yet, at the same time, should so eternally bungle it, as she does, in making so simple a thing as a married man!"

Mrs. Sterne lost her coquetry and her youthful charm, and settled down, content to be a country parson's wife and no more. As her husband's peculiarities grew apace she found herself more and more unable to understand them, and finally developed a patient and unvarying acquiescence, which must have been wearisome to a man of Sterne's temperament.

Had she had a sense of humour all might have been well, for indeed there are few situations in life which the salt of humour cannot redeem. "As to matrimony," he once said, "my wife is easy and I should be a beast to rail at it."

And again, in *Tristram Shandy*, he writes:
"Cursed luck," said he, biting his lip, "for

Laurence Sterne	69										
<p>a man to be master of one of the finest chains of reasoning in nature, and have a wife at the same time with such a head-piece that he cannot hang up a single inference within-side of it to save his soul from destruction!"</p> <p>It is Sterne's humour, and that alone, which has kept him alive in the memory of his kind. We find it cropping out everywhere—in the parish register, and in his accounts. For instance, when the "retired, thatched house" was repaired, he made the following entry in his account book:</p> <p>"A. Dom. 1741.,</p> <table> <tr> <td>Laid out in sashing the house,</td><td>£12</td></tr> <tr> <td>In stuccoing and bricking the hall,</td><td>4 6d</td></tr> <tr> <td>In building the chair house,</td><td>5</td></tr> <tr> <td>In building the par. chimney,</td><td>3</td></tr> <tr> <td>Spent in shaping the rooms, plastering, underdrawing, and jobbing, God knows how much!"</td><td></td></tr> </table> <p>The following year a little girl was born. She was baptised and christened Lydia—but died the following day. Five years later another girl was born, also christened Lydia, who grew to maturity. By his great love for this child Sterne has redeemed many of his faults</p>	Laid out in sashing the house,	£12	In stuccoing and bricking the hall,	4 6d	In building the chair house,	5	In building the par. chimney,	3	Spent in shaping the rooms, plastering, underdrawing, and jobbing, God knows how much!"		<p>Lydia</p>
Laid out in sashing the house,	£12										
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In building the chair house,	5										
In building the par. chimney,	3										
Spent in shaping the rooms, plastering, underdrawing, and jobbing, God knows how much!"											

Laurence
Sterne

and failings. The light of the will o' the wisp burned steadily for her.

But in spite of Lydia the chains of marriage grew irksome and clanked heavily. When his daughter was about twelve years old he fell in love with Kitty Fourmantelle—a beautiful girl in her twenties. He wrote voluminously and ardently to his “Dear, Dear Kitty,” and that attractive young woman treasured every letter.

“I love you to distraction, Kitty, and will love you to eternity. . . . I have but one obstacle to my happiness, and what that is you know as well as I. . . . God will open a door, when we shall some time be much more together. . . . I pray to God that you may so live and so love me as one day to share in my great good fortune.”

At various times he writes thus to his inamorata; and at other times as an elderly relative might to a young woman of whom he was very fond. For instance:

“MY DEAR KITTY:—I have sent you a pot of sweetmeats and a pot of honey, neither of them half so sweet as yourself; but don't be vain upon this, or presume to grow sour upon this

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<p>character of sweetness I give you; for if you do, I shall send you a pot of pickles (by the way of contraries) to sweeten you up and bring you to yourself again. Whatever changes happen to you, believe me that I am unalterably yours, and according to your motto, such a one, my dear Kitty—</p> <p style="text-align: center;">“ ‘ Qui ne changera pas qu'en mourant.’ ”</p> <p style="text-align: right;">“L. S.”</p> <p>Life must have been a veritable living death to Mr. Sterne, if his heart changed only at dissolution. Shortly afterwards he forgot Miss Fourmantelle. His letters grew paternal, then cool, then ceased altogether. A phoenix rose successively out of the ashes of each dead love.</p> <p>“The Widow,” “Lady Percy,” “Mrs. H.,” the Toulouse charmer, and the innumerable grisettes, all had their little day. In the whirl of London society, where he was courted, petted, and flattered by the great, he forgot Kitty, Mrs. Sterne, and even Lydia. “The English Rabelais” had written <i>Tristram Shandy</i>; popular approval was set upon the book, which was daring, even in a licentious age; and as the last shreds of the tattered cassock were</p>	<p>Tristram Shandy</p>

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Sterne

blown away he published *Parson Yorick's Sermons*.

Regarding Mrs. Sterne he says: "She declares herself happier without me—but not in anger is this declaration made, but in pure, sober, good sense, built on sound experience." Yet shortly afterward he is again home, writing another volume of the book and reading to his wife, who sat and knit as she listened.

At last he went to Paris, and sent for his wife and daughter to come to him, giving most minute directions about the journey and planning for every contingency that might arise. His last letter to his wife, in this series of directions, is even affectionate. He writes:

"Now, my dears, once more pluck up your spirits, trust in God, in me, and in yourselves. Write instantly and tell me you triumph over all fears. Tell me Lydia is better and a help-mate to you. You say she grows like me. Let her show me that she does so in her contempt of small dangers, and fighting against the apprehension of them, which is better still. . . . Dear Bess, I have a thousand wishes, but have a hope for every one of them.

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<p>You shall sing the <i>jubilate</i>. So God bless you, adieu. Believe me your affectionate,</p> <p style="text-align: right;">"L. STERNE.</p> <p>"Memorandum: Bring watch chains, tea-kettles, knives, cookery book, etc. You will smile at this last article. So adieu.</p> <p>"At Dover, the Cross Keys; at Calais, at the Lyon d'Argent."</p> <p>They lived happily in France for some little time, then Sterne received notice from his physicians that the air of the place was too sharp for his lungs, and that he must return to England. Mrs. Sterne liked France, and was determined to stay there, so he went alone, resigned to the separation from his wife, but with sincere regret at parting from his daughter. He remained in Paris long enough to fall in love again. To his friend Hall he wrote:</p> <p>"I have been for eight weeks smitten with the tenderest pains that ever human wight underwent. I wish, dear cousin, thou couldst conceive (perhaps thou canst, without my wishing it,) how deliciously I cantered away with it the first month—two up, two down—always upon my haunches along the street, from my hotel to hers—at first once, then</p>	<p>At the Lyon d'Ar- gent</p>

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Sterne

twice, then three times a day—until at length I was within an ace of setting up my hobby horse in her stable for good and all.

“I might as well, considering how the enemies of the Lord have blasphemed thereupon.

“The last three weeks we were every hour upon the doleful ditty of parting—and, my dear cousin, how it altered my gait and air—for I came and went like any condemned carl, and did nothing but mix tears and *jouer des sentiments* with her from sun rising to the setting of the same; and now she is gone to the south of France.”

The amours of Yorick were considered public property. At one time in London, when Sterne was talking loudly about some man who had neglected his wife, and suggesting as a fit punishment that he should “be hung up at his own door,” Garrick, the actor, returned, slyly: “Sterne, you live *in lodgings* !”

The affair with Lady Percy, who was considered somewhat easy of morals, came next. He wrote to her:

“Does it give you pleasure to make me more unhappy, or does it add to your triumph that you have turned a man into a fool, whom the

rest of the town is courting as a wit? I am a fool—the weakest, the most ductile—the most tender fool that ever woman tried the weakness of—and the most unsettled in my purposes and resolutions of recovering my right mind. . . . I know nothing but sorrow—except this one thing, that I love you (perhaps foolishly, but)

“Most sincerely,

“L. STERNE.”

This attachment, it is to be presumed, followed the usual course of the tender passion, and died out. His daughter, Lydia, was now grown; and a French gentleman, whose name is not known, wrote to Mr. Sterne asking for her hand. He also asked how much money Mr. Sterne could give her as a dowry, and how much she would have at his death. *Tristram Shandy* himself might have dictated Sterne’s reply:

“Sir, I shall give her ten thousand pounds the day of marriage. My calculation is as follows; she is not eighteen, you are sixty-two—there goes five thousand; then, Sir, you at least think her not ugly, and as she has many accomplishments—speaks Italian, &c. I think

A Matter
of Dowry

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Sterne

you will be happy to take her on my terms, for here finishes the account of the ten thousand pounds."

The emotions of the French gentleman are not described, but he did not marry Miss Sterne.

It was now time for *A Sentimental Journey*, in which Mr. Sterne went a-pleasuring through France, though his French was inaccurate and usually amusing. Several affairs of the heart are recorded in its pages, where Yorick, the victim, is but thinly disguised.

During the latter part of 1776, before *A Sentimental Journey* was finished, he met "Eliza"—who seems to have been his last love. She, like many of the others, was married. Her husband was "Daniel Draper, Esq., Counsellor at Bombay."

Mrs. Draper found the Indian climate trying, and her husband sent her to England, with her children. Sterne was making a Christmas visit, after finishing the ninth book of *Tristram*, and met her—quite by accident.

At first, he was not pleased with her appearance. She was pale, sickly, and unhappy. Later, as he knew her better, he discovered her

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<p>potent charm. "Nor ever was there," he said, "nor will there be, that man of sense, tenderness, and feeling, in your company three hours, that was not or will not be your admirer and friend in consequence of it."</p> <p>They had mutual friends, at whose home they frequently met. Eventually, Yorick took the public into his confidence regarding this new fancy. People began to talk, and an English traveller, passing through Marseilles, where Mrs. Sterne and Lydia then were, made them fully acquainted with the new London scandal.</p> <p>Mrs. Sterne, with unexpected spirit, said that she "wished not to be informed." Lydia wrote to her father, telling what they had heard, and what her mother had said. Mr. Sterne replied that "he honoured her mother for her answer," and then attempted to justify himself, saying:</p> <p>"T is true I have a friendship for her; but not to infatuation. . . . I believe I have judgment enough to discern hers and every woman's faults."</p> <p>Many a man, more discerning and more</p>	<p>Judgment on Woman's Faults</p>

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Sterne

critical, has been shipwrecked upon the rock of that same belief.

His letters to Eliza, it is true, are not like those he wrote to his wife in the days of their courtship. But while muscles develop and strengthen with use, the slender threads of sentiment do not. The violence of an affection ultimately impairs it, with a nature like Laurence Sterne's.

Ten of his letters to her have been preserved, and all of them indicate affection and devotion, if not love. He was no longer young, however, and the spell of the little blind god is not the same at sixty as at twenty-eight. Yet he writes to her as follows:

"I cannot rest, Eliza, though I shall call on you at half past twelve, till I know how you do. May thy dear face smile, as thou risest, like the sun of this morning. I was much grieved to hear of your alarming indisposition yesterday; and disappointed, too, at not being let in.

"Remember, my dear, that a friend has the same right as a physician. The etiquettes of this town (you 'll say) say otherwise. No matter! Delicacy and propriety

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<p>do not always consist in observing their frigid doctrines.</p> <p>“I am going out to breakfast, but shall be at my lodgings by eleven, when I hope to read a single line under thy own hand that thou art better and wilt be glad to see thy Bramin.</p> <p>“9 o’clock.”</p> <p>It is uncertain whether or not the scandal reached India, but, none the less, Mr. Draper decided that his wife and children had wandered long enough, and sent for Eliza to come home. She was ill again; Sterne pleaded with her to remain for good; the ship was delayed; and for some time the matter hung in the balance. He wrote:</p> <p>“I wish to God, Eliza, it was possible to postpone the voyage to India for another year. For I am firmly persuaded within my own heart, that thy husband could never limit thee with regard to time.</p> <p>“I fear that Mr. B—— has exaggerated matters. I like not his countenance. It is absolutely killing. Should evil befall thee, what will he not have to answer for? . . . He will be an outcast, alien—in which case I will</p>	<p>Eliza</p>

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Sterne

be a father to thy children, my good girl! Therefore take no thought about them.

“But, Eliza, if thou art so very ill, still put off all thoughts of going to India this year. Write to your husband—tell him the truth of your case. If he is the generous, humane man you describe him to be, he cannot but applaud your conduct.

“I am credibly informed that his repugnance to your living in England arises only from the dread, which has entered his brain, that thou mayst run him in debt beyond thy appointments and that he must discharge them.

“That such a creature should be sacrificed for the paltry consideration of a few hundred is too, too hard! Oh my child, that I could with propriety indemnify him for every charge, even to the last mite, that thou hast been of to him! With what joy would I give him my whole substance—nay, sequester my livings, and trust the treasures Heaven has furnished my head with, for a future subsistence! . . .

“Talking of widows, pray, Eliza, if ever you are such, do not think of giving yourself to some wealthy nabob—because I design to marry you myself.

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<p>“My wife cannot live long—she has sold all the provinces in France already—and I know not the woman I should like so well for her substitute as yourself. ’Tis true, I am ninety-five in constitution, and you but twenty-five—rather too great a disparity this!—but what I want in youth, I will make up in wit and good humour.</p> <p>“Not Swift so loved his Stella, Scarron his Maintenon, or Waller his Saccharissa, as I will love and sing thee, my wife elect! All those names, eminent as they were, shall give place to thine, Eliza.</p> <p>Tell me, in answer to this, that you approve and honour the proposal, and that you would (like the Spectator’s mistress) have more joy in putting on an old man’s slipper, than associating with the gay, the voluptuous, and the young.</p> <p>“Adieu, my Simplicia!</p> <p style="text-align: right;">“Yours, “TRISTRAM.”</p> <p>Making proposals of marriage, to be carried into effect as soon as his wife was dead, seems to have been quite a habit with Sterne. Yet Atropos stayed her scissors, with her wonted</p>	<p>“My Simplicia”</p>

Laurence
Sterne

irony, and Mrs. Sterne survived her lord and master.

The ladies came home from France. Lydia had become a young woman, educated as was proper for an Englishwoman who had lived in France, and her father was delighted with her. "I am fully content with her mother's care of her," he said, "for she is as accomplished a slut as France can produce."

They came in September, and after Christmas he started to London with his friend Hall. He had been ill, he was weak from the effects of the fever, and his age and infirmities lay heavily upon him. He embraced his wife and daughter and kissed his Lydia fondly, little dreaming that it was for the last time.

The old charm of London, the fascination of society, and the whirl of pleasure were not to be resisted. He plunged into the vortex, regardless of his health, and was seized with an influenza, which later became pleurisy; and though he was bled and blistered, as was the medical fashion of the day, it was evident that the end was near.

His last letter was to a Mrs. James, who was Eliza's friend as well as his. He committed his

Lydia to her friendly care; but his idolised daughter died in the French Revolution, fifteen years afterward.

The
Rooms
on Bond
Street

He was left alone in his rooms on Bond Street, in those last bitter days, with a servant of the lodging-house for his only attendant. As he lay dying a knock was heard at the door, and a footman entered, come from a house near-by to inquire as to his health.

The footman waited till the end, saw the thin arm raised as if to ward off a blow, and heard the almost inarticulate murmur from white lips: "Now it is come!"

Then he went back to the house, where a large party was gathered, and told the news to the feasters, most of whom were Sterne's friends. For the space of half an hour they lamented him, and then the talk turned on other things—so soon are we forgotten in this workaday world.

"Alas, poor Yorick!" His publisher and a single friend followed him to the tomb, while ghouls watched outside and marked the spot where he was laid. Two nights afterward the body was stolen, shipped to Cambridge, and placed, strangely enough, upon the dissecting

84	Love Affairs of Literary Men
Laurence Sterne	<p>table at his old University. A friend recognised his features and fainted away, when it was too late to stop the desecration.</p> <p>In a neglected graveyard in London, where weeds and tottering headstones speak eloquently of decay, his bones are now laid. Some day, when the city creeps like the incoming tide over the desolation, and the memorials of the past are irreverently covered by present progress, the pick and the shovel may once more disturb his resting-place; and some one, who is not a "Prince of Denmark," may hold another Yorick's skull in his hands.</p>

William Cowper



William Cowper

IN the whole range of literature there are few things more pitiful than the sad story of William Cowper. Students of heredity will find much evidence to support their theory in the line of Cowper's immediate ancestors, from the eccentric John Donne, who prepared his own funeral sermon, and had a portrait of himself painted in his winding-sheet, down to Cowper's father, who gave him a treatise on suicide while he was yet a child, and desired to know his opinion of it.

To his mother, the gentle Anne Cowper, the poet was indebted for his peaceful and contented childhood. She died when he was but six, leaving a little son a week old; and yet all through his life Cowper remembered her with tenderest affection. When she had been dead and buried fifty years she was still as real to him as when he sat at her knee, and amused

The Ec-
centric
John
Donne

William
Cowper

himself by pricking the figures on her gown into tissue paper with a pin.

With singular blindness the Reverend John Cowper decided that his son should study law after his education was otherwise completed. So the nervous, sensitive boy was imprisoned in an attorney's office, but he soon found something more to his liking.

His father's brother, Ashley Cowper, lived not far from the office where the embryo lawyer was supposedly at work. He had a family of growing daughters, mischievous, high-spirited girls, who made their cousin very welcome at all times, even when they, too, should have been doing other things.

When Cowper was twenty-one he fell deeply in love with one of his cousins, Theodora; but her father forbade the marriage, not without good and sufficient reasons. They were first cousins, and the young lover had no prospects. "What will you do for a living if you marry William Cowper?" the stern parent asked his daughter.

"Do, sir?" she replied, "why, wash all day and ride out on the great dog at night!"

This solution of the problem was not con-



William Cowper



Mary Unwin

20

William Cowper	89
<p>vincing, however; and at last it became evident, even to Theodora and her lover, that their marriage would be unwise, and they sorrowfully agreed to separate, exchanging vows of eternal devotion.</p> <p>Nineteen or twenty love poems, addressed "To Della," were not published until twenty-five years after Cowper's death. Theodora never saw him again, but she treasured the faded packet through her long, unwedded life, faithful as she had promised to be.</p> <p>Though he was doubtless much in love with Theodora, the disappointment did not embitter him as much as romantic biographers would have us believe; for, two years after, he took admiring note of another young woman. In writing to a friend he said:</p> <p>"I lately passed three days in Greenwich, a blessed three days; and if they had been three years I should not have envied the gods their immortality. There I found that lovely and beloved little girl, of whom I have often talked to you; she is at that age, sixteen, at which every day brings with it some new beauty to her form. No one can be more modest, nor (what seems wonderful in a woman) more</p>	<p>"To Della"</p>

William
Cowper

silent; but when she speaks you might believe that a muse was speaking. Woe is me that so bright a star looks to another region, having risen in the West Indies; thither it is about to return and will leave me nothing but sighs and tears."

Yet, in spite of this, there is no reason to doubt that he always loved Theodora, not with the hot blood of youth, it is true, but with a gentle, chastened, and perhaps sad affection.

Yet ere we looked our last farewell
From her dear lips this comfort fell:
"Fear not that Time, where'er we rove,
Or absence, shall abate my love."

Thus he wrote of her, and in the after years she proved that hers was no idle fancy, but rather the deep and lasting love which sweetens life even while it saddens it, as the sunset lights penetrate the grey gloom of gathering clouds.

There is no need to dwell upon the sorry details of his first madness, nor to write of that wise and gentle Dr. Cotton who watched him for months, soothing him, dispelling hallucinations, and exorcising the demons that tormented him by day and night. John Cowper,

the younger brother whose birth had taken his mother away from him, was watching too with Dr. Cotton, and hoping against hope. At last the madness was dispelled, and those who loved Cowper believed it was forever.

His conversion took place at this time, also, greatly to the delight of his brother and his physician. His own version of the event reads:

"In a moment I believed and received the Gospel. Whatever my friend Madan had said to me, so long before, revived in its clearness, with 'demonstration of the Spirit and with power.' Unless the Almighty arm had been about me, I think I should have died with gratitude and joy. My eyes filled with tears, and my voice choked with transport. I could only look up to heaven in silent fear, overwhelmed with love and wonder."

Upon leaving the asylum he found himself sorely straightened in finances. His family withdrew a part of the support which had been given him, and he did not know which way to turn. At this juncture he received an anonymous letter, of which he wrote to Lady Hesketh as follows:

"I have a word or two more to say on the

Lady
Hesketh

William
Cowper

same subject. While this troublesome matter was in agitation, and I expected little less than to be abandoned by the family, I received an anonymous letter, in a hand utterly strange to me, by the post. It was conceived in the kindest and most benevolent terms imaginable, exhorting me not to distress myself with fears lest the threatened event should take place; for that, whatever deduction of my income might happen, the defect should be supplied by a person who loved me tenderly and approved my conduct."

This was doubtless Theodora, watching over her lover from afar.

He settled in Huntingdon, where he lived the life of a recluse for some little time, attending church regularly, but speaking to no one, and taking many solitary walks. One day, when out in the country, he met a young stranger who introduced himself as William Unwin, saying that he should have called upon him, if he had not thought that he preferred solitude.

Cowper went home to tea with the courteous stranger, and met a very congenial family. Besides the father and mother of his friend,

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<p>there was a daughter, Susanna, about eighteen years of age.</p> <p>"In her mother's company," he wrote, "she says little; not because her mother requires it of her. but because she seems glad of that excuse for not talking, being inclined to bashfulness." Mrs. Unwin was much younger than her husband, and Cowper found her so delightful that he afterward said: "When I returned to my lodgings I gave thanks to God, who had so graciously answered my prayers by bringing me into the society of Christians."</p> <p>In a letter to his friend Joseph Hill this passage occurs:</p> <p>"The old gentleman is a man of learning and good sense, and as simple as parson Adams. His wife has a very uncommon understanding, has read much, to excellent purpose, and is more polite than a duchess. The son, who belongs to Cambridge, is a most amiable young man, and the daughter quite of a piece with the rest of the family."</p> <p>The attraction between Cowper and the Unwins grew day by day, and he spent much of his time with them. In speaking of a</p>	<p>Cowper and the Unwins</p>

William
Cowper

conversation he had in the garden with Mrs. Unwin, he said it did him more good than he should have received from an audience of the first prince in Europe.

"That woman is a blessing to me, and I never see her without being better for her company. I am treated in the family as if I was a near relation, and have been repeatedly invited to call upon them at all times.

"You know what a shy fellow I am; I cannot prevail with myself to make so much use of this privilege as I am sure they intend I should; but perhaps this awkwardness will wear off hereafter. It was my earnest request, before I left St. Albans, that wherever it might please Providence to dispose me, I might meet with such an acquaintance as I find in Mrs. Unwin. . . . Now that I know them, I wonder that I liked Huntingdon so well before I knew them, and am apt to think I should find every place disagreeable that had not an Unwin belonging to it."

Cowper, like many another bachelor, found it difficult to manage his household affairs without extravagance. He wrote:

"A man cannot always live upon sheep's

head and liver and lights, like the lions in the Tower; and a joint of meat is an endless incumbrance. My butcher's bill for last week amounted to four shillings and ten pence. I set off with a leg of lamb, and was forced to give part of it away to my washerwoman. Then I made an experiment upon a sheep's heart, and that was too little. Next, I put three pounds of beef into a pie, and this like to have been too much, for it lasted three days, though my landlord was admitted to a share in it. In short, I never knew how to pity poor housekeepers before; but now I cease to wonder at that politic cast which their occupation usually gives to their countenance, for it is really a matter full of perplexity."

Mrs. Unwin doubtless gave him much housewifely advice, but he evidently found it very difficult to combine theory and practice, for shortly afterward the Unwins suggested that he board with them. The lonely man gladly accepted this solution of his troubles, and at once entered the home which was to be his for more than twenty years.

Though Mrs. Unwin was but seven years older than he, Cowper continually spoke of

His New
Home

William
Cowper

her as "a second mother." "Mrs. Unwin has almost a maternal affection for me," he wrote "and I have something very like a filial one for her, and her son and I are brothers."

And again: "The lady in whose house I live is so excellent a person, and regards me with a friendship so truly Christian, that I could almost fancy my own mother restored to life again, to compensate to me for all the friends I have lost and all my connexions broken."

Financial troubles again perplexed him, for his family, vexed because he kept a needed servant, threatened to diminish the support on which he depended. Mrs. Unwin thereupon reduced the stipulated payment by half, and he thankfully accepted the new arrangement. But on finding that he was boarding, and that his expenses were not likely to be increased, the family did not fulfil the threat; and so, for a time, all went well.

Cowper took a great interest in gardening, and his friends sent him seeds, plants, and cuttings, so that his time was healthfully occupied. During the winter he devoted himself to literature, at the suggestion of Mrs.

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<p>Unwin, who generously praised everything he wrote.</p> <p>Two years after he went to live with them Mr. Unwin was thrown from his horse and killed. His death made a great change in the family finances, and necessitated a removal to a smaller house.</p> <p>William Unwin, the son, was now a clergyman, and Miss Unwin was engaged to be married; but neither Mrs. Unwin nor Cowper ever thought of such a thing as separation. It was at this time that they became acquainted with that strenuous preacher of the gospel, the Reverend John Newton.</p> <p>It was he who urged them to remove to Olney, and found a house for them, where Mrs. Unwin, her daughter, and Cowper made their new home.</p> <p>John Newton believed most heartily in the gospel of work, and infused some of his own enthusiasm into Cowper's frail body, with disastrous results. They visited the sick and poor, prayed with the dying, and conducted public meetings everywhere. The long strain told upon Cowper, his brother John died, Miss Unwin was married, and—people began</p>	<p>Reverend John Newton</p>

William
Cowper

to talk because Mrs. Unwin and Cowper continued to live together.

This gossip sorely distressed them both, but neither would consent to a separation. Finally, though biographers differ upon this point, it seems certain that they became engaged to be married. Cowper was wretched and unhappy. Dreams tortured him by night, doubts and forebodings by day, and once again he went mad.

He was at Newton's during this attack, but Mrs. Unwin attended him faithfully every day. In speaking of it afterward, he said to Lady Hesketh:

"I believed that everybody hated me, and that Mrs. Unwin hated me most of all; was convinced that my food was poisoned, together with ten thousand megrims of the same stamp. . . . At the same time that I was convinced of Mrs. Unwin's aversion to me, I could endure no other companion. The whole management of me consequently devolved upon her, and a terrible task she had. She performed it, however, with a cheerfulness hardly ever equalled on such an occasion; and I have often heard her say that if ever she

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<p>praised God in her life, it was when she found that she was to have all the labour. She performed it accordingly, but, as I hinted once before, very much to the hurt of her own constitution."</p> <p>Cowper made one attempt at suicide during this affliction, which, like the others, was unsuccessful. Mrs. Unwin had left her own home that she might give all of her time to him, and slanders distressed her even while she was engaged in this work of mercy. Finally she induced Cowper to go back to her own house with her. It was gardening time again, and the outdoor employment proved a blessing. Some friends gave him three rabbits, which he christened "Puss," "Bess," and "Tiney," and with which he was greatly pleased.</p> <p>One day he saw a lady enter a shop opposite the house, and asked who she was. Mrs. Unwin replied that she was Lady Austen, the widow of a baronet, who was visiting her sister in Olney. Cowper expressed a desire to meet her, so Mrs. Unwin invited her to tea.</p> <p>This friendship proved a great blessing to Cowper. "She is a lively, agreeable woman," he wrote to Newton, "who has seen much of</p>	<p>"Puss," "Bess," and "Tiney"</p>

100	Love Affairs of Literary Men
William Cowper	<p>the world, and accounts it a great simpleton—as it is. She laughs and makes laugh, and keeps up a conversation without seeming to labour at it.”</p> <p>Yet the intrusion of another element had its effect upon both Cowper and Mrs. Unwin. There was a quarrel, which distressed Cowper very much, judging from his letters to William Unwin. For instance:</p> <p>“My letters have already apprised you of that close and intimate connection that took place between the lady you visited in Queen Ann Street and us. Nothing could be more promising, though sudden in the commencement. She treated us with as much unreservedness of communication as if we had been born in the same house and educated together. At her departure she herself proposed a correspondence, and because writing does not agree with your mother, proposed a correspondence with me. . . . At length, having had repeated occasion to observe that she expressed a sort of romantic idea of our merits, and built such expectations of felicity upon our friendship as we were sure that nothing human could possibly answer, I wrote</p>

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<p>to remind her that we were mortal, to recommend it to her not to think more highly of us than the subject would warrant. . . . Your mother heard me read the letter, she read it herself, and honoured it with her warm approbation. But it gave mortal offence; it received indeed an answer, but such an one as I could by no means reply to; and there ended (for it was impossible it should ever be renewed) a friendship that bid fair to be lasting."</p> <p>Still again he writes to William Unwin upon the same subject:</p> <p>"Having imparted to you an account of the fracas between us and Lady Austen, it is necessary that you should be made acquainted with every event that bears any relation to that incident. The day before yesterday she sent me by her brother-in-law, Mr. Jones, three pair of worked ruffles, with advice that I should soon receive a fourth. I knew they were begun before we quarrelled. I begged Mr. Jones to tell her when he wrote next, how much I thought myself obliged, and gave him to understand that I should make her a very inadequate, though the only return in my power, by laying my volume at her feet.</p>	<p>Lady Austen</p>

William
Cowper

This likewise she had previous reason given to expect. Thus stands the affair at present; whether anything in the shape of a reconciliation is to take place hereafter, I know not."

Cowper confesses to a correspondent that Lady Austen's vivacity at times wearied both him and Mrs. Unwin, accustomed as they were to quiet. One of Cowper's biographers says that Lady Austen expected him to marry her, and that Mrs. Unwin's jealousy prevented it. However that may be, Lady Austen left Olney for good, and the unbroken quiet was resumed.

Soon afterward, however, Lady Hesketh, Cowper's cousin and Theodora's sister, wrote him affectionately, after years of silence, and he answered gladly. She inquired delicately into his financial condition, and he soon received anonymous notice of an anonymous contribution in the shape of an annuity of five hundred pounds. Though Cowper suspected it, but never knew definitely, this was again evidence of Theodora's lasting love.

Lady Hesketh came to Olney, a widow, and took a house near-by. Cowper had written:

"I long to show you my workshop, and to see you sitting on the opposite side of my

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<p>table. We shall be as close packed as two wax figures in an old-fashioned picture-frame. I am writing in it now. It is the place in which I fabricate all my verse in summer time. . . . The grass under my windows is all bespangled with dew-drops and the birds are singing in the apple trees, among the blossoms. Never poet had a more commodious oratory in which to invoke his muse."</p> <p>Lady Hesketh brought her carriage and pair, and the three had many pleasant drives together, subject, of course, to the uncharitable comments of the neighbours. She decided finally that both Cowper and Mrs. Unwin would be better off elsewhere, so she secured a house at Weston, furnished it to her liking, and saw them safely into it. She also added several pounds to their annual income.</p> <p>William Unwin paid them a visit there, but died suddenly on the day after his departure from his own home. To Mrs. Unwin, enfeebled by years and illness, the shock was a great one, from which she never fully recovered.</p> <p>It became Cowper's turn to comfort her, which he did as best he could. For five or six years following Mr. Unwin's death he was</p>	<p>Death of William Unwin</p>

William
Cowper

in better health than he had ever been before. Mrs. Unwin was almost crippled by a fall upon the ice. A paralytic stroke followed some time after, and in his anxiety for her, coupled with the effects of his hard work at the *Iliad*, he began to fail.

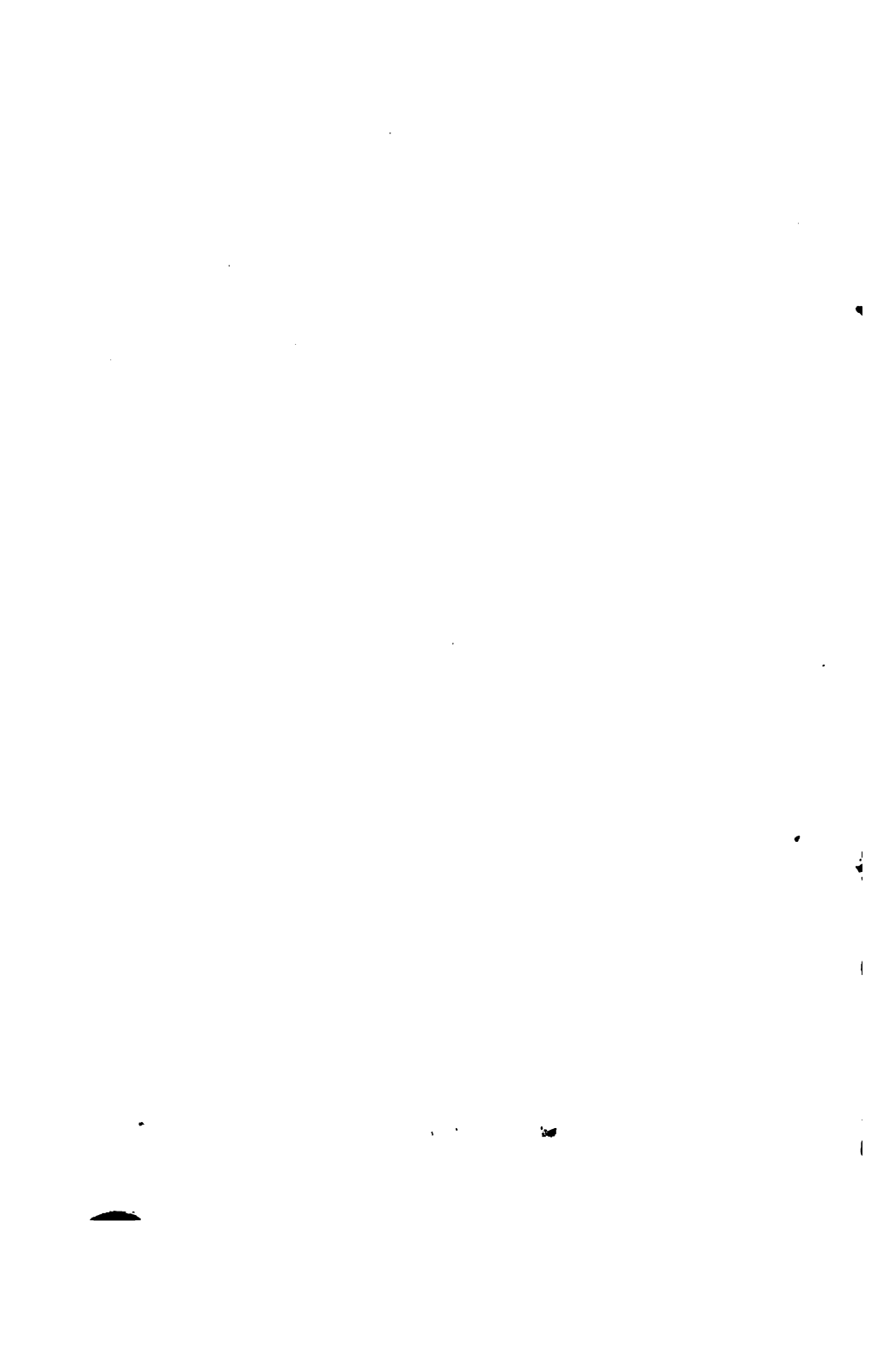
The old horrors gathered round him. Dreams and forebodings from which he could not escape, coupled with the eternal fear of madness, daily preyed upon him. Yet these two spent their twilight together, each consoling the other.

Lady Hesketh, still tenderly watching, arranged their removal to Norfolk. Both improved for a time, then Mrs. Unwin failed more rapidly, and deep depression took possession of the poet's mind.

At last Mrs. Unwin died, and after the first agony of grief was over, Cowper was possessed with the fear that she would be buried alive. "She is not actually dead," he said, so difficult it was for him to believe that the friend and comforter of over twenty years had been taken away from him.

From that time his despondency was never broken, though his friends tried every means

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<p>in their power. He died peacefully, after days of apathetic calm. The end came without a struggle, as he lay asleep; and it is said that the expression on his face "was that of calmness and composure, mingled, as it were, with holy surprise."</p> <p>We who grope blindly on the other side of the veil which divides us from him, can only guess at the secret which brought him peace at last. That lost mother, whom he so tenderly loved, may have been waiting with outstretched arms for the aged, broken man who was once her child; side by side with Mary Unwin, whose steadfast devotion has been compared with that of the other Mary, who was last at the Cross and first at the tomb.</p>	<p>A Peaceful Death</p>



Thomas Carlyle

Thomas Carlyle

THE heart history of the Carlyles is infinitely touching. We have come to associate the name with domestic discord; but between these two strong natures, though there was great conflict, there was also great love.

Jane Welsh was many times in love, in a romantic, girlish fashion. There is a record of one "Benjamin B——" to whom she alludes as "a frank, unaffected young man." Later, when she saw him on the opposite bank of the river, she wrote to a friend in this fashion:

"Let any human being conceive a more tantalising situation! I saw him and durst not make any effort to attract his attention, though, had my will been consulted in the matter, to have met him eyes to eyes and soul to soul I would have swam, ay, swam across, at the risk of being dosed with water gruel for a month to come.

"Providence has surely some curious design

Domestic
Discord

Thomas
Carlyle

respecting this youth and me. It was on my birthday that we parted—it was on my birthday that we met, or, but for that confounded river, should have met again.”

This was not lasting, however, for some time later she wrote to the same friend: “Mr. Benjamin B—is become the most disagreeable person on this planet!” She was evidently disgusted with all of her admirers, for again she writes:

“George Rennie! James Aitken! Robert MacTurk! James Baird! Robby Angus! O Lord! O Lord! Where is the St. Preux? Where is the Wolmar?”

It was Edward Irving, her former tutor, who first sounded the depths of her heart. He had instructed her in Latin, Greek, and mathematics—unusual studies for a girl in those days,—and as soon as she had completed her education he went away. When he saw her again he was affianced to another, but his heart went out passionately toward his pupil, grown into a beautiful and charming woman.

She fully returned this regard, but, upon learning that he was not free, sternly forbade him to speak of it again. She was simple-



Thomas Carlyle



Jane Welsh Carlyle

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<p>hearted, sternly moral, and inflexible. There were no perplexing psychological problems for Jane Welsh—a clear, unbroken dividing line lay forever between right and wrong.</p> <p>In spite of her warnings he told his fiancée, Miss Martin, and her father as well, the true state of his feelings, offering to carry his pledge to fulfilment if they should desire. Both Miss Martin and her father desired it, and so they were married, living together far more happily than the Carlyles.</p> <p>It was Edward Irving who first introduced Thomas Carlyle to Miss Welsh. He was rough, uncouth, and just from the farm, but the intellectual comradeship was at once apparent. They studied German together, and the girl's active, eager mind developed rapidly. She learned to depend on him far more than she realised. At length he proposed marriage, and she refused in this manner:</p> <p>"My friend, I love you—I repeat it, though I find the expression a rash one. All the best feelings of my nature are concerned in loving you. But were you my brother, I should love you the same. No! Your friend I will be, your truest, most devoted friend, while I</p>	<p>Jane Welsh</p>

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Carlyle

breathe the breath of life. But your wife never! never! Not though you were as rich as Cræsus, as honoured and renowned as you yet shall be!"

Carlyle took her decision philosophically, intimating that after all it was very wise, and as for his heart, it was "too old by half a score of years, and made of sterner stuff than to break in junctures of this kind." He was twenty-eight, and had passed through one love-affair—with a Margaret Gordon, a peasant to whom he would have been engaged had not friends interfered, and had not the young woman herself, seeing dimly the possibilities of his future, bravely given him up.

The correspondence between Miss Welsh and Carlyle still continued. She depended more and more upon him, the sympathy between them grew stronger, and he tried his fortunes again. She refused, but promised that she would not marry any one else.

With a wisdom quite foreign to one unversed in the ways of woman, he left her to herself. He made her understand that he would not have her marry him unless she loved him, and that she was perfectly free.

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<p>Later she wrote him, saying:</p> <p>"My affection for you increases. Not many months ago I would have said it was impossible that I should ever be your wife. At present. I consider that the most probable destiny for me. In a year or two I shall perhaps consider it the only one."</p> <p>It was a strange courtship. With remorseless introspection these two sought only to know their own hearts. There were doubts on both sides—wonder, both hidden and expressed, as to whether this feeling were truly the master-passion. "If you judge it fit," he wrote to her, "I will take you to my heart as my wedded wife this very week. If you judge it fit, I will this very week forswear you forever."</p> <p>When they finally decided to be married there was another long delay, much discussion as to where they should live, and another difficulty in the shape of Mrs. Welsh, now left alone in the world. As the day for the dreaded ceremony approached Miss Welsh wrote to him:</p> <p>"Oh, my dearest friend, be always so good to me, and I shall make the best and happiest</p>	<p>The Approach of the Wedding Day</p>

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Carlyle

wife! When I read in your looks and words that you love me, then I care not one straw for the whole universe besides. But when you fly from me to smoke tobacco, or speak of me as a mere circumstance of your lot, then, indeed, my heart is troubled about many things."

The ceremony itself was regarded by both of them as some terrible calamity. Carlyle prepared himself for the ordeal by reading Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason*. Miss Welsh headed her last letter to him: "The Last Speech and Marrying Words of that Unfortunate Young Woman, Jane Baillie Welsh." He wrote in reply:

"After all, I believe we take this impending ceremony too much to heart. Bless me! Have not many people been married before now?"

At last the momentous affair was over, and they were settled in their own home. It was the end of Jane Welsh's happy girlhood, and the beginning of that time of mingled good and evil, of exultant happiness and deep despair, of great courage in the face of misfortune, and of heartache which men may guess at, but only women may understand.

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<p>It may be questioned whether Carlyle was fitted for marriage. That great and lonely soul was like some vast cathedral, sore pressed by eternity and inward gloom, through whose silent aisles the years trod heavily, and the distant rumble of past and future came like an infinite question which must be answered by one who does not know. Into the gloomy loneliness, with naught but her love to guide her, and with a brave smile upon her lips, came Jeannie Carlyle.</p> <p>They never lacked for friends. John Stuart Mill, Leigh Hunt, Thackeray, Wordsworth, Darwin, Emerson, and Goethe were among those who were proud to know the Carlyles. When the first volume of <i>The French Revolution</i> was completed, Mill took it home to read. Some days later he staggered into Carlyle's presence, haggard and trembling. By some accident the manuscript had been destroyed, and the labour of five months was irretrievably gone.</p> <p>Carlyle's first thought was for his friend. Stricken though he was, he hastened to make light of it, and Mill stayed for two hours, talking of indifferent things. As the door closed finally, Carlyle said to his wife: "Well, Mill,</p>	<p>Jeannie Carlyle</p>

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Carlyle

poor fellow, is terribly cut up; we must endeavour to hide from him how very serious this business is to us."

They were almost at the end of their slender resources, counting on the book for future needs. Mill insisted upon making good the money value of the loss, and passionately entreated Carlyle to accept it. After many protests he finally accepted half of the sum Mill urged upon him.

The day afterward Carlyle wrote in his journal:

"My dear wife has been very kind and has become dearer to me. The night has been full of emotion, occasionally of sharp pain (something cutting or hard grasping me round the heart), occasionally of sweet consolation. . . . How I longed for some psalm or prayer that I could have uttered, that my loved one could have joined me in! But there was none. Silence had to be my language."

This was too true of him—that silence had to be his language.

Those little tendernesses which are the bread of life to a loving woman were largely left to her imagination. During an absence he

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<p>once reproached her for writing "all about feelings"—which she never forgot nor forgave.</p> <p>Writing, it would seem, was his natural speech. When they were separated there was no repression.</p> <p>He wrote to her:</p> <p>"And thou, my poor Goody, depending on cheerful looks of mine for thy cheerfulness! For God's sake, do not, or do so as little as possible! How I love thee, what I think of thee, it is not probable that thou or any mortal will know. . . . God bless thee, my poor little darling! I think we shall be happier some time, and oh, how happy if God will!"</p> <p>There were many things which were hard for both to bear. Poverty continually stared them in the face. The hideous spectre of insomnia haunted them through interminable weeks. Domestic upheavals, which count for little with those less fine, tormented them continually, and the keenly sensitive nerves of both were tortured by every conceivable noise.</p> <p>Dogs, chickens, cats, and the whole range of harmless animals effectually murdered sleep. There is scarcely a letter in the whole voluminous correspondence which does not speak of</p>	<p>Poverty</p>

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Carlyle

a restless night caused by some trifling noise. Before carpenters, painters, paperhangers, and other domestic evils both were in abject fear. A single letter, written by Mrs. Carlyle to a friend, is an epitome of many similar miseries:

"Carlyle returned from his travels very bilious, and continues very bilious up to this hour. The amount of bile that he does bring home to me, in these cases, is something 'awfully grand!' Even through that deteriorating medium he could not but be struck with a certain 'admiration' at the immensity of needlework I had accomplished in his absence, in the shape of chair-covers, sofa-covers, window curtains, and so forth, and all the other manifest improvements into which I had put my whole genius and industry, and so little money as was hardly to be conceived.

"For three days his satisfaction over the rehabilitated house lasted; on the fourth, the young lady next door took a fit of practising on her accursed pianoforte, which he had forgotten, seemingly, and he started up disenchanted in his new library, and informed heaven and earth in a peremptory manner

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<p>that there he 'could neither think nor live,' that the carpenter must be brought back and steps taken to make him a quiet place somewhere—perhaps best of all on the roof of the house.</p> <p>"Then followed interminable consultations with the said carpenter, yielding for some days only plans (wild ones) and estimates. The roof of the house could be made all that a living author of irritable nerves might desire, silent as a tomb, lighted from above, but it would cost us £120! Impossible, seeing that we may be turned out of the house any year. So one had to reduce one's schemes to the altering of rooms that already were.</p> <p>"Up went the carpets which my own hands had laid down; in rushed the troop of incarnate demons, bricklayers, joiners, and white-washers, whose noise and dirt and dawdling had lately driven me to despair. . . . My husband himself, at sight of the uproar he had raised, was all but wringing his hands and tearing his hair, like the German wizard servant who has learnt magic enough to make the broomstick carry water for him, but had not the counter spell to stop it.</p>	<p>Expensive Alterations</p>

Thomas
Carlyle

"He had now a fair chance, however, of getting a settlement effected in the original library; the young lady next door having promised to abstain religiously from playing till two o'clock, when the worst of his day's work is over. Generous young lady! But it must be confessed, the seductive letter he wrote her the other day was enough to have gained the heart of a stone."

One may easily fancy that life was not easy for the wife of such a man, and during the rewriting of the first volume of *The French Revolution*, the writing of the second, of *Cromwell*, and of *Frederick the Great*, there were uncounted trials for Jeannie Carlyle.

Her nerves gave way under the strain, and her married life was one long physical suffering. But he never realised that this was in any way due to him, and wrote to her always with great tenderness.

"Adieu, dear life-partner, dear little Goody of me. Be well and love me."

And again:

"Oh, my dear Jeannie, I have more regard for thee than perhaps thou wilt ever rightly know! But let that pass. The Angel, as

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<p>thou sayest, doth stir the waters more ways than one. Surely our better days are still coming."</p> <p>Yet the shadow of "the other woman," which casts its baneful influence upon the pathway of marriage, was not withheld from her. Lady Harriet Baring, afterward Lady Ashburton, took a great fancy to the famous Carlyle. She was a brilliant woman, of high rank, and gathered around her all the choice spirits of her day. In her house he met people distinguished in art and letters, whom he otherwise would not have known.</p> <p>It was this simply, and nothing more. Mrs. Carlyle honestly tried to like Lady Harriet, but she was snubbed and patronised by turns. It was not until Lady Harriet died that poor Jeannie's sore heart was easy; and only after her death, when her various letters were returned to him, did he realise in what way he had hurt her, and how deeply the knife had struck home.</p> <p>There is not a single letter of Carlyle's that would allow one to doubt his love for his wife. When she did not write to him he was as wretched as any lover deprived of the ex-</p>	<p>Lady Harriet</p>

Thomas
Carlyle

pected letter, and he wrote pathetic little notes which would have brought tears to the eyes of any woman whose heart had not been cruelly hardened in self-defence.

For example, he writes:

"My poor little Jeannie, my poor, ever-true life-partner, hold up thy little heart. We have had a sore life pilgrimage together, much bad road, poor lodging, and bad weather, little like what I could have wished or dreamt for my little woman. . . . My poor, heavy-laden, brave, uncomplaining Jeannie! Oh, forgive me, forgive me for the much I have thoughtlessly done or omitted, far, far at all times from the poor purpose of my mind! And God help thee, poor suffering soul, and also me!

"People do not help me much. Oh, darling! when will you come back and protect me? God above will have arranged that for both of us, and it will be His will, not ours, that can rule it. My thoughts are a prayer for my poor little life-partner who has fallen lame beside me after travelling so many steep and thorny ways. I will stop this, lest I fall to crying altogether."

Mrs. Carlyle had been steadily failing. A

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<p>fall made her a helpless invalid for many months, and though she suffered greatly, she did not complain. From this long illness she partially recovered—the old nervousness and sleeplessness were nearly gone, but she was very frail.</p> <p>The end came while her husband was away. She went out for a drive, taking her little dog, Nero, with her. The dog was hurt in the street by a passing carriage; she sprang out to pick him up, and took him into the brougham with her, petting him and soothing him.</p> <p>The drive continued for some time. The coachman received no directions, and at last became alarmed. Seeing a gentleman standing near-by, he drove up and asked him to look into the carriage. The gentleman told him to take the lady to a hospital which was near-by. But she sat there with her hands folded on her lap—dead.</p> <p>Two telegrams reached Carlyle from different sources. For the rest he tells it in his journal: "Saturday night about 9 P.M. I was sitting in Sister Jean's at Dumfries, when the fatal telegrams, two of them in succession, came.</p>	<p>The Fatal Telegrams</p>

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Carlyle

It had a kind of stunning effect on me. Not for above two days could I estimate the immeasurable depths of it, or the infinite sorrow which had peeled my life all bare, and in a moment shattered my poor world to universal ruin. They took me out next day to wander, as was medically needful, in the green, sunny Sabbath fields, and ever and anon there rose from my sick heart the ejaculation, 'My poor little woman!' But no full gust of tears came to my relief nor has yet come. Will it ever?

"Sixteen hours after the telegram, Sunday, about 2 P. M., there came to me a letter from her, written on Saturday before going out, the cheeriest and merriest of all her several prior ones.

"Never for a thousand years shall I forget that arrival here of ours, my first unwelcomed by her. She lay in her coffin, lovely in death. Pale death and things not mine or ours had possession of our poor darling. . . .

"I went out to walk in the moonlit silent, streets, not suffered to go alone. I looked up at the windows of the old house, where I had first seen her, on a summer evening after sun-

set, six and forty years ago. Edward Irving had brought me out walking to Haddington, she the first thing I had to see then; the beautifullest young creature I had ever beheld, sparkling with grace and talent, though sunk in sorrow and speaking little. I noticed her once looking at me. Oh heavens, to think of that now! . . .

“ I retired to my room, slept none all night, little sleep to me since that telegram night, but lay silent in the great silence. Thursday, April 26, wandered out into the churchyard. At 1 P. M. came the funeral, silent, small, only twelve old friends and two volunteers besides us there. Very beautiful and noble to me, and I laid her in the grave of her father, according to covenant of forty years back, and all was ended.

“ In the nave of the old Abbey Kirk, long a ruin, now being saved from further decay, with the skies looking down on her, there sleeps my little Jeannie, and the light of her face will never shine on me more.”

From that hour Carlyle's life was broken. Every day and every hour the sorrow waxed great and sore. In the fragments of his

A Great
Sorrow

Thomas
Carlyle

journal are countless evidences of this. For instance:

"Tears, I think I have done with; never, except for moments together, have I wept for that catastrophe of April 21, to which whole days of weeping would have been in other times a blessed relief. . . . This is my poor 'Sweetheart Abbey,' 'Cor Dulce,' or 'New Abbey,' a sacred casket and tomb for the sweetest heart which in this bad, bitter world was all my own. Darling! Darling! and in a little while we shall both be at rest and the Great God will have done with us what was His Will."

And once more:

"Never till her death did I see how much she loved me. Nor, I fear, did she ever know, could she have seen across the stormy clouds and eclipsing miseries, what a love I bore her, and shall always, how vainly now, in my inmost heart. . . . Alas, alas! I was very blind and might have known how near its setting my bright sun was."

The old grave-digger of the churchyard at Haddington took note of the man of eighty-six, who came to the little grave in the nave of the Abbey Kirk. He said:

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<p>“Mr. Carlyle himself is to be brought here to be buried with his wife. Ay, he comes here lonesome and alone when he visits the wife’s grave. His niece keeps him company to the gate, but he leaves her there and she stays there for him. The last time he was here I got a sight of him, and he was bowed down under his white hairs, and he took his way up by that ruined wall of the old cathedral, and round there and in here by the gateway, and he tottered up here to this spot.</p> <p>“And he stood here awhile in the grass and then he kneeled down and stayed on his knees at the grave; then he bent over and I saw him kiss the ground—ay, he kissed it again and again, and he kept kneeling, and he kept kneeling, and it was a long time before he rose and tottered out of the cathedral and wandered through the graveyard to the gate, where his niece was waiting for him.”</p> <p>Thus Carlyle learned the bitter lesson that all of time and eternity may be imprisoned in a single heart—that the Infinite is love and a grave. The solemn summons of the vast unknown no longer beat upon his soul. The light was suddenly changed into darkness, for</p>	<p>Carlyle and his Niece</p>

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<p>Thomas Carlyle</p>	<p>the little woman with "the bit smile" had feared to thread a longer way among those gloomy aisles, where she had found so much heartache mingled with her joy. And we must believe that life's true meaning was clear and beautiful at last, as he knelt, white-haired and broken—kissing the pitiless sod that lay between him and Jeannie Carlyle.</p>

Edgar Allan Poe

Edgar Allan Poe

THE fine gifts of temperament and imagination which are essential to the production of true poetry are often accompanied by morbid sensibility. The soul capable of ecstasy and transport must pay its price in suffering; he who walks upon the heights must sometimes grovel in the dust. Such was the case with Edgar Allan Poe.

His sensibility, morbid though it was, is infinitely pathetic, even in a rational age. His schoolmates said: "No one knows him," and yet, all through his life, he hungered for the sympathy, understanding, and love of his kind.

When he was little more than fourteen years old, and while he was at the Academy in Richmond, a schoolmate took him to his home. Here he met the mother of his friend, Mrs. Helen Stannard. She was very gentle and gracious to him, and in an instant his lonely

At the
Academy
in Rich-
mond

Edgar
Allan
Poe

heart went out to her as it might have done to his own mother, had she lived. She became his confidante and his redeeming influence. There was need for a hand like hers on the feverish pulse of the boy, who was old for his years.

She died when he needed her most, and the first grief of a heart that was to bear so many, was intense and terrible. She was buried in a cemetery near Richmond, and for months afterward he haunted her grave. "When the autumnal rains fell, and the winds wailed mournfully over the graves, he lingered longest, and came away most regretfully."

She died—but never to him. For years he was inexpressibly sad, and we may well believe that in those "solitary churchyard vigils, with all their associated memories," the sorrow and gloom of the after years began. He confessed to Mrs. Whitman that his poem "To Helen" was inspired by the memory of this boyish love.

Then came an affair which was not unlike Byron's attachment to Mary Chaworth. The first love of a boy who is also a poet is the most sublimated passion of which human clay is



Edgar Allan Poe

Sarah Whitman

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<p>capable. He was still in the Academy, and Elmira Royster lived across the street from the Allans, who had adopted him. He was seventeen and she was between fourteen and sixteen.</p> <p>They considered themselves engaged, and after he left for the University he wrote to her frequently. Mr. Royster thought his pretty daughter was too young to be married, and, with doubtful wisdom, intercepted the letters. It was not until after his sweetheart was married to Mr. Shelton, at seventeen, that Poe discovered why his letters had not been answered.</p> <p>After he was dismissed from West Point, Poe visited his aunt, Mrs. Clemm, who lived in Baltimore. Here he met his cousin, Virginia, who was not quite fourteen, and was a very beautiful girl.</p> <p>One day the revelation came to both. "We spoke no words during the rest of that sweet day," he said, "and our words even upon the morrow were tremulous and few. . . . And now we felt enkindled within us the fiery souls of our forefathers. The passions which had for centuries distinguished our race came</p>	<p>Dismissed from West Point</p>

Edgar
Allan
Poe

thronging with the fancies for which they had been equally noted, and together breathed a delirious bliss over the 'Valley of the Many-Coloured Grass.' . . . Strange, brilliant flowers burst out upon the trees where no flowers had been known before, and the tints of the green grass deepened. . . . No guile disguised the fervour of love which animated her heart, and she examined with me its inmost recesses as we walked together." It was like another Virginia, walking with her Paul.

Poe was twenty-seven, and, upon learning of his purpose, a distant relative of Mrs. Clemm offered to take Virginia into her own family and to complete her education, saying that the marriage seemed unwise and that there was no need of haste, adding that if the cousins still loved each other after a few years, they could be married. Poe heard of the offer, and wrote a passionate and indignant protest to Mrs. Clemm. The opportunity was declined, and the two were married.

The three lived together, and Poe became so deeply attached to the mother of his Virginia that they formed a united household. He spent his leisure in completing his wife's

education. She was a fine linguist and an accomplished musician, and he often said: "I see no one so beautiful as my sweet little wife."

*My Dear
Virginia*

But their unalloyed content was of short duration. Poverty, that handmaid of the great, was forever a threatening spectre at their door. At last Mrs. Poe ruptured a blood-vessel in singing and was never well again. He had written once, in a story:

"How could she die?—and of consumption! But it is a path I have prayed to follow. I would wish all I love to perish of that gentle disease. How glorious! to depart in the hey-day of the young blood—the heart all passion—the imagination all fire—amid the remembrances of happier days!"

Yet when the grim hand of the destroyer was laid upon his Virginia's breast, his grief was beyond words. The fear of her loss haunted him night and day, and the threatening spectre, grown bold at last, fearlessly entered in.

There is but a single letter written by him to his wife, and this reads as follows:

"My Dear Heart—My Dear Virginia—Our

Edgar
to the
the

mother will explain to you why I stay away from you this night. I trust the interview I am promised will result in some substantial good for me—for your dear sake and hers—keep up your heart in all hopefulness, and trust yet a little longer. On my last great disappointment I should have lost my courage but for you—my little darling wife. You are my greatest and only stimulus now, to battle with this uncongenial, unsatisfactory, and ungrateful life.

“I shall be with you to-morrow P.M. and be assured until I see you I will keep in loving remembrance your last words and your fervent prayer!

“Sleep well, and may God grant you a peaceful summer with your devoted

“EDGAR.”

The little store of money was all gone, and the distracted husband was unable to earn more. An eye-witness describes the situation in these words:

“There was no clothing on the bed, which was straw, but a snow-white counterpane and sheets. The weather was cold and the sick lady had the dreadful chills that accompany

the hectic fever of consumption. She lay on the straw bed wrapped in her husband's great coat, with a large tortoise-shell cat in her bosom. The wonderful cat seemed conscious of her great usefulness. The coat and the cat were the sufferer's only means of warmth, except as her husband held her hands, and her mother her feet.

The needed aid came, but it was too late. She died two or three days afterward, and owing to the kindness of the good Samaritan who had befriended them, was laid away in linen garments—a fact which brought strange comfort to the mother's sore heart.

After it was all over, Poe fell ill and lay in a stupor for several days, but the new friends did not fail him, though it was a long time before he was in any sense himself, and before he recovered, in some slight measure, from her death.

She was in his heart when he wrote:

For the moon never beams without bringing me dreams
Of my beautiful Annabel Lee,
And the stars never rise but I see the bright eyes
Of my beautiful Annabel Lee;
And so all the night-tide I lie by the side

The Good
Samaritan

138	Love Affairs of Literary Men
Edgar Allan Poe	<p data-bbox="339 272 792 363">Of my darling, my darling, my life and my bride, In her sepulchre there by the sea— In her tomb by the sounding sea.</p> <p data-bbox="313 392 854 794">Poe had three or four staunch women friends. Mrs. Clemm never ceased to love him as if he had been her son, and Mrs. Osgood, who was Frances Sargent, was his life-long friend, with the exception of a single quarrel, for which neither was to blame. It was Marie Louise Shew who was so kind to his wife in her last illness, and he had an affectionate regard for her, as also for the "Annie" whom he calls his "dear sister," and his "sweet sister Annie."</p> <p data-bbox="313 807 854 1137">The episode with Mrs. Helen Whitman is extremely romantic. Her poems had attracted his attention and in a lecture on "The Female Poets of America" he praised her particularly. He had never met her, but as he wandered from his hotel during a restless night, near the house where she lived, he saw her walking in her garden. This incident is commemorated in the poem which begins:</p> <p data-bbox="344 1166 854 1246">I saw thee once, once only—years ago, In the winter of 1847, Mrs. Whitman con-</p>

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<p>tributed some anonymous verses, addressed to Poe, to a "Valentine" party which was given to the literati in New York. In June, he wrote to a friend as follows:</p> <p>"Do you know Mrs. Whitman? I feel deep interest in her poetry and character. I have never seen her—never but once. —, however, told me many things about the romance of her character which singularly interested me and excited my curiosity. Her poetry is beyond question <i>poetry</i>—instinct with genius. Can you not tell me something about her—anything, everything you know—and keep my secret, that is to say, let no one know that I have asked you to do so? May I trust you? I can and will."</p> <p>The English lady to whom this letter was addressed ultimately gave it to Mrs. Whitman. Poe, not knowing of it, finally secured a letter of introduction and presented it to her. He came again, and with characteristic impulsiveness told her of his love. She sent him away, but promised to write, and his answer to her first letter, in part, is as follows:</p> <p>"I have pressed your letter again and again to my lips, sweetest Helen, bathing it in tears</p>	<p>A "Valentine" Party</p>

Edgar
Allan
Poe

of joy, or of 'a divine despair.' But I—who so lately, in your presence, vaunted the power of words—of what avail are mere words to me now? Could I believe in the efficiency of prayers to the God of Heaven, I would indeed kneel—humbly kneel—at this, the most earnest epoch of my life—kneel in entreaty for words, but for words that should disclose to you—that might enable me to lay bare to you my whole heart.

"All thoughts, all passions seem now merged in that one consuming desire—the mere wish to make you comprehend—to make you see that for which there is no human voice—the unutterable fervour of my love for you; for so well do I know your poet nature, that I feel sure, if you could but look down now into the depths of my soul with your pure spiritual eyes, you could not refuse to speak to me what, alas! you still resolutely leave unspoken—you would love me if only for the greatness of my love. Is it not something in this cold, dreary world *to be loved*? Oh, if I could but burn into your spirit the deep, the true meaning which I attach to those three syllables underlined! but, alas! the

effort is all in vain and 'I live and die unheard.' "

"Eccentricities"

If words could burn, then, indeed, these passionate letters must have seared the lady's heart. Dwelling upon the first thought of her, as lovers will, he says:

"I have already told you that some few casual words spoken of you by — — were the first in which I had ever heard your name mentioned. She alluded to what she called your "eccentricities," and hinted at your sorrows. Her description of the former strangely arrested, her allusion to the latter enchained and riveted, my attention.

". . . From that hour I loved you. Since that period I have never seen nor heard your name without a shiver, half of delight half of anxiety. The impression left upon my mind was that you were still a wife, and it is only in the last few months that I have been undeceived in this respect. . . .

"The merest whisper that concerned you awoke in me a shuddering sixth sense, vaguely compounded of fear, ecstatic happiness, and a wild, inexplicable sentiment that resembled

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nothing so nearly as a consciousness of guilt. . . .

"And now, in the most simple words I can command, let me paint to you the impression made upon me by your personal presence. As you entered the room, pale, hesitating, and evidently oppressed at heart, as your eyes rested for one brief moment upon mine, I felt, for the first time in my life, and tremblingly acknowledged, the existence of spiritual influences altogether out of reach of reason. I saw that you were *Helen, my Helen*—the Helen of a thousand dreams. She whom the great Giver of all good had preordained to be mine—mine only—if not now, alas! then hereafter and *forever* in the Heavens. . . .

"Your hand rested within mine and my whole soul shook with a tremulous ecstasy; and then, but for the fear of grieving or wounding you, I would have fallen at your feet in as pure, in as real a worship as was ever offered to Idol or to God."

In spite of this impassioned pleading, Mrs. Whitman steadfastly refused to marry him. He reproached her bitterly, and then begged for her forgiveness, urging her to forget every-

<p style="text-align: center;">Edgar Allan Poe</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">143</p>
<p>thing but his love. She wavered in her determination, and he asked her to put off her decision for a week and then write to him.</p> <p>She promised, but the letter she wrote was still indecisive. She did not wish to marry him, or to give him up. He was wretched, as might be expected, and, going to Boston, made an unsuccessful attempt at suicide.</p> <p>Later he went back to Providence, and called upon her. She was agitated and restless, and refused to see him then, but sent word that she would receive him at noon. He sent a message, saying that he must see her, and she returned the same answer—that she would see him at noon.</p> <p>The eventful hour came. Then, and on the day following, he endeavoured to persuade her to marry him and go immediately to New York. When he called the second time, she showed him some letters from friends of hers, reproaching her for receiving his attentions.</p> <p>He was hurt to the quick, and immediately took his departure. That evening, instead of calling, he sent her a note of final farewell in which he said that in the future they would meet as strangers. Yet on the following day</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">The Hour of Noon</p>

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he was again at her house, pleading with her once more.

She finally consented to become his wife, upon the condition that he would never touch liquor again. He gave his word solemnly and kept it—for a time. On his way home he wrote to her, saying:

"MY OWN DEAREST HELEN:

"So kind, so true, so generous—so unmoved by all that would have moved one who had been less than angel; beloved of my heart, of my imagination, of my intellect—life of my life—soul of my soul—dear, dearest Helen, how shall I ever thank you as I ought!

"I am calm and tranquil, and but for a strange shadow of coming evil which haunts me, I should be happy. That I am not supremely happy, e'en when I feel your dear love at my heart, terrifies me. What can this mean?

" . . . I write this to show you that I have not dared to break my promise to you. And now dear, dearest Helen, be true to me."

And again, we find him writing thus:

"In little more than a fortnight, dearest Helen, I shall once again clasp you to my

heart; until then I forbear to agitate you by speaking of my wishes—of my hopes, and especially of my fears. You say that all depends on my own firmness. If this be so, all is safe—for the terrible agony which I have so lately endured—an agony known only to my God and myself—seems to have passed my soul through fire and purified it from all that is weak.

“Henceforward I am strong; this those who love me shall see, as well as those who have so relentlessly endeavoured to ruin me. It needs only some such trials as I have just undergone, to make me what I was born to be, by making me conscious of my own strength. But all does not depend, dear Helen, upon my firmness—all depends upon the sincerity of your love.”

Yet once again the castle of his happiness crashed suddenly into ruins. Preparation had been made for the wedding, and he had written to Mrs. Clemm to expect him, with his bride, upon the appointed day, when Mrs. Whitman was informed that he had broken his pledge.

She sent for him, and though there was no

The
Crash of
the Castle
of Happiness

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Poe

outward sign, she knew at once, with swift womanly intuition, that it was true. As they looked into each other's eyes, the inner conflict in the soul of each was all at once made clear. She knew that he had fought and lost. He knew that "the Helen of a thousand dreams" must ever be a dream to him.

Worn out with love and sorrow and stunned by having her worst fears confirmed, she drenched her handkerchief with ether and flung herself upon a sofa, sobbing, and praying for merciful unconsciousness. He sank on his knees beside her, begging her for a single word. At last she whispered, so low that even Love could scarcely hear, "What can I say?"

"Say that you love me, Helen," he responded quickly, then added, with infinite tenderness, "*I love you.*"

Those were the last words she ever heard from his lips, for they never met again. In this great sorrow it was "Annie" and the ever-faithful, loving mother of his Virginia who consoled him. Yet the end of the doubt and uncertainty seems to have brought some sort of relief, for he wrote to "Annie":

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<p>“I need not tell you, Annie, how great a burden is taken off my heart by my rupture with Mrs. W.; for I have fully made up my mind to break the engagement. Nothing would have deterred me from the match but—what I tell you.”</p> <p>After a little time, he went to Richmond, and, strangely enough, renewed his acquaintance with Mrs. Shelton, now a widow, who was the Elmira Royster he had loved.</p> <p>For the rest, she says:</p> <p>“I was ready to go to church when a servant entered and told me that a gentleman in the parlour wished to see me. I went down and was amazed at seeing Mr. Poe, but knew him instantly. He came up to me in the most enthusiastic manner, and said ‘Oh, Elmira, is it you?’</p> <p>“I then told him that I was going to church; I never let anything interfere with that, and that he must call again. . . .</p> <p>“When he did call again, he renewed his addresses. I laughed; he looked very serious and said he was in earnest, and had been thinking about it for a long time. When I found out that he was quite serious, I became</p>	<p>Elmira Royster</p>

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Allan
Poe

serious also, and told him that if he would not take a positive denial, he must give me time to consider. He answered: 'A love that hesitates is not the love for me.' "

Though there is no record of a definite engagement, there seems to have been an understanding, for he wrote to Mrs. Clemm, informing her of his projected marriage, and asked her to be ready to return to Richmond with him, to make his home her own.

He called upon Mrs. Shelton before leaving, saying he would return as soon as he had attended to some business affairs in New York but, at the same time, he said that he had a presentiment that he should never see her again.

He was right,—he had looked into the eyes of his boyhood's love for the last time.

The circumstances of his death are shrouded in painful mystery, but once again he broke his pledge. His friends finally found him in a hospital, and he never knew any one of them. Mrs. Shelton, looking forward to her marriage, received the news of his death instead, and Mrs. Clemm, the mother of his

Virginia, was grieved as deeply as if she had again lost her only child.

The
Unhappy
Master

Unhappy Master whom unmerciful Disaster,
Followed fast and followed faster till his songs one burden
bore—
Till the dirges of his Hope that melancholy burden bore
Of "Never—nevermore."

We are as ships that go down to the sea.
Some are destined for calm waters and smooth sailing, others for rocks and the storm. Some, who are pitifully weak, are mercifully spared the trial; to others, strong enough to face the breakers, the joy of the struggle is denied. There are some who meet the rush of waters without fear, and find triumph doubly sweet in the end.

For that Unhappy Master, who fought so bravely against cruel odds, who faced the storm and thunder and scarcely knew the sun, there can be only pity in our hearts. He was as sensitive as the needle of the compass which Fate denied him, so that a wound became crucifixion. He suffered much, and seemingly without compensation—his poet's vision could not pierce the threatening cloud. He forever

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Edgar Allan Poe	questioned, but there was no answer, save that which comes back to us through the years, like a solemn knell suddenly changing to mocking laughter—"Nevermore!"

Percy Bysshe Shelley

Percy Bysshe Shelley

IT is said of Shelley that "he was unfailingly picturesque in all that he did," and the truth of the assertion is strikingly evident in his love affairs. Some other poet, dying at thirty, may have had a greater number of desperately serious attachments, but History has failed to record his name.

His first love was his cousin, Harriet Grove. He was sixteen or seventeen, and she was about the same age. This charming young woman, who was the daughter of a clergyman, came, with her brother, on a visit to Field Place, very soon after Shelley had left Eton. A definite engagement soon followed, but the speculative and philosophical tendency of his writings alarmed her, and probably her father also. After a correspondence which lasted two years, the affair was terminated by Miss Grove, who, shortly afterward, married another.

For some time, the lover was inconsolable.

Unfailing
in Picturesque

Percy
Bysshe
Shelley

In his letters to his friend Hogg, written at this period, he alluded constantly to the "sorrow with which fate has marked my life," and "the never-dying remorse which my egotistical folly has occasioned." From this incident arose his lifelong warfare for intellectual, religious, and social freedom. "My unhappiness is excessive," he wrote to Hogg; "but I will cease. I will no more speak in riddles, but now quit forever a subject which awakens too powerful susceptibilities for even negative misery. But that which injured me shall perish! I even now by anticipation hear the expiring yell of intolerance! . . . You shall see—you shall hear—how it has injured me. She is no longer mine! she abhors me as a sceptic, as what she was before! Oh, bigotry! When I pardon this last, this severest of thy persecutions, may Heaven, if there be wrath in Heaven, blast me! . . . I am afraid there is selfishness in the passion of love, for I cannot avoid feeling every instant as if my soul was bursting, but I will feel no more! It is selfish. I would feel for others, but for myself—oh, how much rather would I expire in the struggle! Yes, that were a relief! Is

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<p>suicide wrong? I slept with a loaded pistol and some poison last night, but did not die.”</p> <p>In answer to his friend’s attempted consolation, he wrote thus:</p> <p>“Forget her? What would I not have given up to have been thus happy. . . . Hard is the agony which is indescribable, which is only to be felt. . . . Forsake her! Forsake one whom I loved! Can I? Never! But she is gone—she is lost to me forever; forever!”</p> <p>A week later, in another letter, he mournfully reiterated his loss.</p> <p>“She is gone! She is lost to me forever! She is married! Married to a clod of earth; she will become as insensible herself; all those fine capabilities will moulder!”</p> <p>One Sunday, Shelley took his friend, Hogg, home to dine with his father. During the poet’s temporary absence, the following conversation took place:</p> <p>“You are a very different person, sir,” said the elder Shelley to his guest, “from what I expected to find; you are a nice, moderate, reasonable, pleasant gentleman. Tell me what you think I ought to do with my poor boy. He is rather wild, is he not?”</p>	<p>Shelley and Hogg</p>

Percy
Bysshe
Shelley

"Yes, rather."

"Then, what am I to do?"

"If he had married his cousin, he would perhaps have been less so. He would have been steadier."

"It is very probable that he would."

"He wants somebody to take care of him; a good wife. What if he were married?"

"But how can I do that? It is impossible; if I were to tell Bysshe to marry a girl, he would refuse directly. I am sure he would; I know him so well."

"I have no doubt that he would refuse, if you were to order him to marry; and I should not blame him. But if you were to bring him in contact with some young lady, who, you believed, would make him a suitable wife, without saying anything about marriage, perhaps he would take a fancy to her; and if he did not like her, you could try another."

This suggestion seemed excellent, and, with a Mr. Graham, also his guest at the same time, the elder Shelley went carefully over the names of all the young women of their acquaintance. They were still at it, when the young poet

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<p>returned, and, naturally, the good work ceased instantly.</p> <p>A pamphlet entitled <i>The Necessity of Atheism</i> caused Shelley's expulsion from Oxford, and also estrangement from his father. Money was no longer forthcoming and the boy was thrown upon his own resources, but his sisters saved their pocket money and sent it to him, a young girl named Harriet Westbrook sometimes acting as the messenger. He had met her previously, when he called upon her with a present from his sister Mary and a letter of introduction.</p> <p>"Harriet was a charming girl," writes one who saw her; "even a beauty; beauty enough to be designated for the part of Venus in some school <i>fête champêtre</i>, with a complexion brilliant in pink and white, with hair quite like a poet's dream and Bysshe's peculiar admiration, colour light brown. She was small and delicately made, and nearly, if not quite, sixteen. . . . not only delightful to look at, but altogether most agreeable. She dressed with exquisite neatness and propriety; her voice was pleasant and her speech cordial; her spirits were cheerful, and her manners good.</p>	<p>The Necessity of Atheism</p>

Percy
Bysshe
Shelley

She was well educated, a constant and agreeable reader; adequately accomplished in music. She had great fortitude, if it should not rather be called insensibility, of temperament."

Harriet's cruel and unreasonable parent endeavoured to make her go to school. Shelley advised her to resist to the uttermost, and at the same time tried to mollify the persecutor.

"I advised her to resist," wrote Shelley, to Hogg. "She wrote to say that resistance was useless, but that she would fly with me and threw herself on my protection. We shall have two hundred pounds a year; when we find it run short, we must live, I suppose, upon love! Gratitude and admiration all demand that I should love her forever. We shall see you at York. I will hear your arguments for matrimonialism, by which I am now almost convinced."

A few months later, he eloped to Scotland with Harriet, and they were married, both bride and groom being under age. They took lodgings in Edinburgh, and were soon joined by Hogg. Mr. Westbrook made a small allowance to the young couple, but nothing came from Shelley's father, until the following year.

Percy Bysshe Shelley

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Other relatives assisted him, however, and when his father finally yielded him a very moderate support, he had an income of four hundred pounds a year.

Encouraged by the regular receipt of money, Shelley went to his father some months later, but the offended parent refused to be mollified and the estrangement became permanent.

Shortly after his marriage, Shelley discovered that he had married not only Harriet, but her elder sister, Eliza. She took up her abode with the young couple, and assumed the management of the household. She kept the common stock of money in her own pocket and doled it out as occasion—or her judgment—required.

According to a well-authenticated description, Eliza was not beautiful. "She was older than I had expected, and she looked much older than she was. The lovely face was seamed with smallpox, and of a dead white, as faces so much marked and scarred commonly are; as white, indeed, as a mass of boiled rice but of a dingy hue, like rice boiled in dirty water. The eyes were dark, but dull, and without meaning; the hair was black and glossy, but

**Harriet
and
Eliza**

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<p>Percy Bysshe Shelley</p>	<p>coarse; and there was the admired crop,—a long crop, much like the tail of a horse,—a switch tail.”</p> <p>With the omnipresent Eliza, they wandered far. Harriet’s first child, a daughter, was born in a hotel, and Eliza extended her management to the new member of the family. Gradually, Eliza wore upon Shelley, but Harriet steadfastly refused to part with her.</p> <p>At first, he was very happy with Harriet. “My wife,” he wrote to Godwin, “is the partner of my thoughts and feelings.” They read together—when Eliza permitted it. It is quite probable that Eliza’s constant presence had more than a little to do with Shelley’s frequent visits to the home of Madame de Boinville and her daughter, Cornelia Newton. There, at least, was peace.</p> <p>Harriet failed to understand the various visits to Madame de Boinville and other women, and grieved; not silently, as is the way of wiser ones, but openly. In this she was vigorously supported by the energetic Eliza.</p> <p>Yet Shelley remained faithful, even though the situation at home was wellnigh insupportable to one of nervous temperament. “I</p>

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<p>am a young man," he said in one of his letters, "and have been married to a woman younger than myself. Love seems inclined to stay in the prison." And again: "When I come home to Harriet, I am the happiest of the happy."</p> <p>The young husband and father came of age in August, 1813. In March, 1814, he re-married Harriet, in order to obviate any doubts as to the validity of his previous marriage. In that same month he wrote to Hogg:</p> <p>"I have been staying with Mrs. B. for the last month; I have escaped, in the society of all that philosophy and friendship combine, from the dismaying solitude of myself. . . . Eliza is still with us—not here!—but will be with me when the infinite malice of destiny forces me to depart. I am now but little inclined to contest this point. I certainly hate her with all my heart and soul. It is a sight which awakens an inexpressible sensation of disgust and horror, to see her caress my poor little Ianthe, in whom I may hereafter find the consolation of sympathy. I sometimes feel faint with the fatigue of checking the overflowings of my unbounded abhorrence for this miserable wretch. But she is no</p>	<p>Shelley Becomes of Age</p>

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Bysshe
Shelley

more than a blind and loathsome worm, that cannot see to sting."

From the foregoing, one may infer that Eliza was not exactly popular with her reluctant host. Nevertheless, she stayed, and stayed, and then began to do more staying. The transition from guest to barnacle is incredibly swift—and barnacles are difficult to remove.

Cornelia Newton was reading Italian with Shelley, while Harriet, Eliza, and the little Ianthe "flocked by themselves." "Did I tell you," wrote Shelley, of Mrs. Newton, "that I once thought her cold and reserved. She is the reverse of this, as she is the reverse of everything bad. She inherits all the divinity of her mother."

Within two months from the time he remarried Harriet, Shelley was in love with Mary Godwin. When or where he met her is uncertain, but they were well acquainted with each other when Hogg went with Shelley, in the spring of 1814, to call upon William Godwin.

"I stood reading the names of old English authors on the backs of the venerable volumes," wrote Hogg, "when the door was partially

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<p>and softly opened. A thrilling voice called 'Shelley!' A thrilling voice answered, 'Mary!' And he darted out of the room, like an arrow from the bow of the far-shooting king. A very young female, fair and fair-haired, pale indeed, and with a piercing look, wearing a frock of tartan, an unusual dress in London at that time, had called him out of the room. He was absent a very short time—a minute or two; and then returned. 'Godwin is out; there is no use in waiting.' So we continued our walk along Holborn.</p> <p>"'Who was that, pray?' I asked; 'a daughter?'"</p> <p>"'Yes.'"</p> <p>"'A daughter of William Godwin?'"</p> <p>"'The daughter of Godwin and Mary.'"</p> <p>Mary Godwin was now seventeen. She is described as "rather short, remarkably fair and light-haired, with brownish-grey eyes, a great forehead, striking features, and a noticeable air of sedateness. She was a little hot-tempered and peevish in youth and careless of dress and speech, outspoken and tenacious of her opinions, a faithful friend, with extraordinary powers of heart as well as head, truth-</p>	<p>The Walk along Holborn</p>

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Shelley

ful and essentially simple, though somewhat anxious to make an impression in company."

Early in the summer of 1814, Harriet lost track of Shelley. She wrote to his publishers, enclosing a pitiful little letter, which she begged them to forward when they "had news of him." It was four or five weeks before communication was reëstablished.

July, 1814, was a busy month for Shelley. In these four weeks, he had met Mary Godwin by her mother's grave, avowed his love for her, and persuaded her to leave England with him. He had also explained to Harriet, who was to bear him another child in December, that he had left her permanently and was on the point of going to a far and sunny country with another lady.

Late in the month, before five o'clock in the morning, Mary Godwin left her father's house, accompanied by her sister, Jane or "Claire," Clairmont—a daughter of the present Mrs. Godwin by a former marriage. Whether or not Shelley was surprised at finding another sister so soon attached to him, is not recorded, but the three went to Dover together and took passage for Calais.

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<p>The journey was sorry enough for an elopement. Mary was suffering from <i>mal de mer</i>, and also, one may suppose, from the pangs of an accusing conscience. Shelley was weighed down by imaginary forebodings. Only Sister was light-hearted and gay, never having eloped before.</p> <p>Their stay at Calais was short. Here they were told that "a fat lady" had been inquiring for them, and mourning because Shelley had run away with her daughter. Before they could escape, the wayworn pursuer had found them, and begged her daughter Claire to return home with her.</p> <p>Shelley, not caring particularly for Sister, also vigorously urged her return, but Claire failed to perceive it. The joy of eloping, even vicariously, was in her young blood, and Mrs. Godwin returned to England alone.</p> <p>The travellers went by stage to Boulogne, then to Paris, where they rested for a week and saw everything that was free, their money having given out. They undertook a pedestrian tour across France into Switzerland, but their enthusiasm waned rapidly. At length Shelley secured a remittance of sixty pounds</p>	<p>The Stay at Calais</p>

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from somewhere, and purchased an ass to carry the baggage, and Mary also when she was too tired to walk.

But the ass balked, and seemed not to care for Switzerland, nor elopements, so they sold him for considerably less than they paid, and bought a mule. Shelley sprained his ankle and was obliged to ride the mule, Mary and Claire walking. Thus they reached Troyes.

Here Shelley sold the mule, also at a sacrifice, and bought a carriage. He also engaged for eight days a man and a mule to take them to Neuchâtel. The man stopped where he and the mule chose, and resumed the journey when both were ready, regardless of the wishes of his employers. Once they started out at three in the morning, the man and the mule being desirous of travel.

For six weeks they wandered, having finally shaken themselves free of the man, mule, and carriage. During the trip, and in less than three weeks from the time they left England, Shelley wrote to Harriet, inviting her to come and stay with them in Switzerland. The letter began "Dearest Harriet," and was signed: "ever most affectionately yours."

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<p>But, for some occult reason, Harriet failed to come.</p> <p>In September they returned to England, and found themselves penniless. Mary's father, who had spent his life in railing against marriage, was violently angry with his daughter on account of her conduct. Mary and Claire stayed in cheap lodgings, while Shelley went to Harriet and got money.</p> <p>Yet Mary complained bitterly of the selfishness of Harriet, and when Harriet, then approaching her confinement, sent her creditors to Shelley, Mary wrote her down as the "nasty woman who compelled them to change their lodgings."</p> <p>Harriet's son was born in November. In April, Mary writes in her diary: "Shelley passes the morning with Harriet, who is in a surprisingly good humour." Once more appears this entry: "Shelley goes to Harriet about his son, returns at four; he has been much teased by Harriet."</p> <p>Soon after their arrival in London, Shelley's worldly position changed for the better. His grandfather died and his father succeeded to the title and the estate. An arrangement was</p>	<p>The Return to England</p>

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effected whereby Shelley received a steady income of a thousand pounds a year. A portion of this was immediately set aside for Harriet and the children.

In January, 1816, a son was born to Mary Godwin. Her first child, a daughter, born prematurely, had lived only a few days. Soon they went to Italy, where, within a few days, they met Lord Byron for the first time. Sister went along, and eventually bore Byron a daughter, which, strangely enough, failed to please either Byron or the Shelleys.

They returned to England late in the year, and Harriet drowned herself. At the close of the year Shelley married Mary Godwin. By this time, surely, he should have been able to go through the marriage ceremony with ease and confidence, if not calmness.

When it was too late, remorse seized him for his past conduct. Throughout his life he suffered deeply, at times, for his heartless treatment of Harriet, though he recovered sufficiently, for the moment, a few months after her death, to characterise her as "a frantic idiot."

William Godwin, who had preached against

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<p>marriage all his life, had made Shelley's marriage with his daughter a condition of his continuing correspondence and friendly relations with them both. Presently, the Shelleys took residence at Marlow, in a country house with extensive gardens. He kept open house and an open purse, and had a weekly list of pensioners among the lace-makers in his immediate neighbourhood.</p> <p>Having his domestic affairs running smoothly at last, Shelley undertook to add Harriet's two children to his household. In this project he encountered violent and unexpected opposition. Mr. John Westbrook, Harriet's father, filed a petition in Chancery stating that Shelley had deserted his wife, was an atheist, and, in short, was no fit person to be entrusted with the care and education of children. The Lord Chancellor agreed with Mr. Westbrook, and Shelley was deprived of two of his children. He was also compelled to pay two hundred pounds a year toward their support.</p> <p>A third child was born to Mary in September, 1817. Fearing that his little son and daughter might also be taken from him, Shelley left England, with his family, in the spring of 1818,</p>	<p>Residence at Marlow</p>

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never to return. "Four years only of life were left to him—years filled with music that will sound as long as English lasts."

As usual, Sister accompanied them, taking with her the little Allegra, Lord Byron's daughter. They went to Milan first, then began a long tour of Italy. Clara, the youngest child, died in Venice.

Two or three years before he left England, a married lady, whose name is not recorded, had written to Shelley that she had read all his books, agreed with all his principles, and, with her fortune, was his. Shelley had answered, pleading a previous engagement, and supposed that the incident was closed. In Naples, however, he encountered the lady, who had followed him. He was obliged to lose her, and she soon died. His *Stanzas Written in Dejection near Naples* have been held pointedly to refer to this circumstance, especially the lines;

"Alas, I have not hope nor health,
Nor peace within, nor calm around."

Soon after the Shelleys returned to Rome, William, the eldest child, died suddenly, and was buried in the Protestant cemetery.

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<p>“The English burying-place,” wrote Shelley, “is a green slope near the walls, under the pyramidal tomb of Cestius, and is, I think, the most beautiful and solemn cemetery I ever beheld. To see the sun shining on its bright grass, fresh, when we first visited it, with the autumnal dews, and hear the whispering of the wind among the leaves of the trees which have overgrown the tomb of Cestius, and the soil which is stirring in the sun-warm earth, and to mark the tombs, mostly of women and young people who were buried there, one might if one were to die, desire the sleep they seem to sleep. Such is the human mind and so it peoples with its wishes vacancy and oblivion.”</p> <p>Four or five months after the death of William, a fourth child, Percy, was born at Florence. They moved to Pisa for the sake of the child's health, and here the Shelleys met “a very clever but disreputable Italian Professor.”</p> <p>The Professor one day related to Shelley the sad story of the Contessina Emilia Viviani, a beautiful young woman, who was confined by her father in a dismal old convent in the</p>	<p>The Tomb of Cestius</p>

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suburbs until she could consent to a distasteful marriage. Shelley was immediately interested, and, in company with the Professor, called upon the distressed damsel, and found her all that the glowing description had previously indicated.

He took Mrs. Shelley to see her, also, and they sent her books and flowers to cheer her exile. Shelley, meanwhile, called as often as the convent regulations would permit.

The beautiful Emilia was the inspiration of *Epipsychidion*, and also of a warm sympathy, not to be distinguished from love, which sprang swiftly into being in the poet's impressionable heart. He desired her to fly, with him and Mary, to some far-distant island, where she and Mary, "like the sun and moon, might rule the world of love within him."

It is said that notwithstanding Mary's superior worldly wisdom and insight, she was occasionally much distressed by her husband's admiration of other women. She herself had once been "the other woman," and realised the danger. Yet, of all the world, she was the one mate for that lawless heart, that fiery spirit, that untamed soul.

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<p>The crushing sorrows they bore together drew them closer, in a bond which Death could not destroy. Such happiness as earth may offer was theirs in fullest measure, in spite of misunderstanding, grief, and loss.</p> <p>Early in the spring of 1821, Pisa became too warm for comfort. Williams and Trelawney went to the Gulf of Spezzia, to find for themselves and the Shelleys a house suitable for the summer months. There was only one—the Villa Magni—which was said to “look more like a boat or bathing house than a place to live in.”</p> <p>The veranda overhung the water, and under it the cool waves sang all day. There was one large living-room downstairs and the upper story was divided into four small bedrooms. Here, amid numerous and appalling household difficulties, the friends established themselves, little dreaming of the great tragedy so soon to follow.</p> <p>Signs and portents perplexed them all. One night Shelley saw the little Allegra, the dead daughter of Byron and Miss Clairmont, rising naked from the calm waters of the Gulf, clapping her hands and laughing. Once,</p>	<p>The Villa Magni</p>

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Shelley aroused the whole house by rushing into his wife's room at midnight, screaming. Mrs. Williams saw Shelley walking on the balcony at a time when he was far from the place. Trelawney saw him in the woods, when, in reality, he was at home. Prophetic and melancholy forebodings beset Mary constantly—yet they remained.

A boat had been built for Shelley and Trelawney, according to specifications of which the boat-builder did not approve, and the men spent much time upon the water. Late in June, Shelley received word that his friend Leigh Hunt had arrived in Genoa and sailed for Leghorn.

On the first of July, Shelley and Williams started for Leghorn in the boat, with one sailor boy. They reached their destination safely, spent a pleasant day or two with Hunt, and began the return voyage.

A sea fog settled down upon the water and there was a furious storm which lasted less than half an hour. When the skies cleared, Shelley's boat was nowhere to be seen.

Trelawney, then at Leghorn, instantly began his long search. Hunt and Byron joined him,

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<p>and for a week the three men, with parties of coastguardsmen, patrolled the shore. Mrs. Shelley and Mrs. Williams were wellnigh mad with anxiety and despair.</p> <p>On the eighteenth of July, the sea gave up its dead, the two bodies being found four miles apart. The rest is best told in Trelawney's own words:</p> <p>"Three white wands had been stuck in the sand to mark the poet's grave, but as they were at some distance from each other, we had to cut a trench thirty yards in length, in the line of the sticks, to ascertain the exact spot, and it was nearly an hour before we came upon the grave.</p> <p>"In the meantime Byron and Leigh Hunt arrived in the carriage, attended by soldiers, and the Health Officer, as before. The lonely and grand scenery that surrounded us so exactly harmonised with Shelley's genius that I could imagine his spirit soaring over us. The sea, with the islands of Gorgona, Capraja, and Elba, was before us; old battlemented watch-towers stretched along the coast, backed by the marble-crested Apennines glistening in the sun, picturesque from their diversified</p>	<p>The Sea Gives Up Its Dead</p>

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Bysshe
Shelley

outlines, and not a human dwelling was in sight.

"As I thought of the delight Shelley felt in such scenes of loneliness and grandeur whilst living, I felt we were no better than a herd of wolves or a pack of wild dogs in tearing out his battered and naked body from the pure yellow sand that lay so lightly over it, to drag him back to the light of day; but the dead have no voice, nor had I power to check the sacrilege—the work went on silently in the deep and unresisting sand, not a word was spoken, for the Italians have a touch of sentiment, and their feelings are easily excited into sympathy. Byron was silent and thoughtful. . . .

"After the fire was well kindled, we repeated the ceremony of the previous day; and more wine was poured over Shelley's dead body than he had consumed during his life. This with the oil and salt made the yellow flames glisten and quiver. The heat from the sun and fire was so intense that the atmosphere was tremulous and wavy. . . . The fire was so fierce as to produce a white heat on the iron and to reduce its contents to gray ashes."

Yet the heart was not burned. Trelawney

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<p>snatched it, entire, from the funeral pyre, while the flames preyed all about it hungrily.</p> <p>Hunt took the heart, reluctantly and after an unpardonable dispute, giving it to Mrs. Shelley. The little volume of Keats which was found, open and bent back, in Shelley's pocket, was burned also. The ashes were buried near the graves of Keats and Shelley's son, William.</p> <p>His epitaph, composed by Hunt, is in Latin, and, aside from the name and dates, reads simply: "Cor cordium." Trelawney added three much-loved lines from <i>Ariel's</i> song, that <i>Ariel</i> for whom the ill-fated craft was named.</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">" Nothing of him doth fade But doth suffer a sea change Into something rich and strange."</p> <p>Though Shelley died at thirty, his life had been so rich, so full of varied experience, that he was, as he himself said, "older than his father and to be reckoned with men of ninety." His brief span summarised human experience and included also the divinest gift of the gods—immortality for "the music that shall sound as long as English lasts."</p> <p>28</p>	<p>The <i>Ariel's</i> Song</p>

1

2

3

John Keats.

John Keats

"THREE small volumes of verse, some earnest friendships, one profound passion, and a premature death—" so wrote Lord Houghton in summarising the life of Keats. Yet, in the rainbow brilliantly spanning the two mysterious silences, what is there for any of us, worth the having, more than work and friends and love?

As it happens, the "three small volumes of verse" have become immortal, the "earnest friendships" were so strong that, half a century after his death, the one who watched his last hours could not speak of him without emotion, and the "one profound passion" stands side by side, in reality, with those of which, in imagination, the great ones have written and sung.

Until he met Fanny Brawne, he seems to have avoided, rather than sought, the society

Fanny
Brawne

John
Keats

of women. "I am certain I have not a right feeling toward women," he wrote; "at this moment I am striving to be just to them, but I cannot." Only once, in his correspondence, is there the smallest hint of susceptibility. At the home of a friend, he met a lady from East India, who touched his fancy, if not his heart.

"She is not a Cleopatra," he said, "but is, at least, a Charmian; she has a rich Eastern look; she has fine eyes and fine manners. When she comes into the room, she makes the same impression as the beauty of a leopardess. She is too fine and too conscious of herself to repulse any man who may address her; from habit she thinks that nothing particular. I always find myself more at ease with such a woman; the picture before me always gives me a life and animation which I cannot possibly feel with anything inferior. I am, at such times, too much occupied in admiring to be awkward or in a tremble: I forget myself entirely because I live in her. You will, by this time, think I am in love with her, so, before I go any farther, I will tell you I am not. She kept me awake one night, as a tune



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Fanny Brawne

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<p>of Mozart's might do. I speak of the thing as a pastime and an amusement, than which I can feel none deeper than a conversation with an imperial woman, the very 'yes' and 'no' of whose life is to me a banquet. I don't cry to take the moon home with me in my pocket, nor do I fret to leave her behind me."</p> <p>The lady thus written of is said to be Miss Charlotte Cox, a cousin of his friend Reynolds. He saw very little of her and the fancy soon passed, as it might not have done otherwise. However, the hour and the woman were soon to come.</p> <p>Charles Brown, an intimate friend of Keats, went to Scotland and leased his house for the summer to Mrs. Brawne, a widow with a grown daughter and two younger children. The Brawnes naturally became acquainted with the Dilkes, living next door, and in the house of this friend, the young poet came face to face with his fate.</p> <p>At first, she irritated him. In describing her to his brother he said:</p> <p>"She is about my height, with a fine style of countenance of the lengthened sort; she wants sentiment in every feature; she manages</p>	<p>Charlotte Cox</p>

John
Keats

to make her hair look well; her nostrils are very fine, though a little painful; her mouth is bad and good; her profile is better than her full face, which, indeed, is not full, but pale and thin, without showing any bone; her shape is very graceful, and so are her movements; her arms are good, her hands bad-ish, her feet tolerable. She is not seventeen, but she is ignorant; monstrous in her behaviour, flying out in all directions, calling people such names that I was forced lately to make use of the term—Minx: this is, I think, from no innate vice, but from a penchant she has for acting stylishly. I am, however, tired of such style and shall decline any more of it."

Again, in another letter:

"Mrs. Brawne, who took Brown's house for the summer, still resides in Hampstead. She is a very nice woman, and her daughter senior, is, I think, beautiful and elegant, graceful, silly, fashionable, and strange. We have a little tiff now and then—and she behaves a little better, or I must have sheered off."

Presently, with strong premonition, comes this:

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<p>“I never was in love, yet the voice and shape of a woman has haunted me these two days—at such a time when the relief, the feverish relief of poetry, seems a much less crime. This morning poetry has conquered—I have relapsed into those abstractions which are my only life—I feel escaped from a new, strange, and threatening sorrow, and I am thankful for it. There is an awful warmth about my heart, like a load of Immortality. Poor Tom—that woman and poetry were ringing changes in my senses. Now, I am, in comparison, happy.”</p> <p>Poetry’s “feverish relief” was soon to fail him, for, as he himself says, within a week he was her vassal. Excepting a silhouette and an old miniature, no portrait of her is extant, but Severn says that the draped figure in Titian’s picture of <i>Sacred and Profane Love</i> is almost her exact counterpart. Colvin describes her as “a brisk and blooming very young beauty, of the far from uncommon English hawk blonde type, with aquiline nose and retreating forehead, sharp-cut nostril, and grey-blue eye, a slight, shapely figure rather short than tall, a taking smile, and good hair, carriage, and complexion.”</p>	<p>The Sacred and Profane Love</p>

John
Keats

An avowal and an engagement soon followed. The friends of Keats, with one accord, considered the attachment unfortunate for him. Though they did not speak unkindly of her, she was, in their eyes, no fitting mate for him in either heart or mind. One of the Dilkes said, in a letter to a friend:

"It is quite a settled thing between Keats and Miss ———. God help them! It's a bad thing for them. The mother says she cannot prevent it, and that her only hope is that it will go off. He don't like any one to look at her or to speak to her."

In a little brown book, first published fifty years ago, are the letters of Keats to his Fanny—less than forty in all. The cover is worn, the leather back cracked, the corners are rubbed, and the yellow pages dog-eared, yet one has only to open it to find within roses and moonlight, music and love. From the little brown book is distilled the fragrance of a pure and holy passion, as from some dusty and cobwebbed rose-jar, long-sealed, comes the perfume of lost gardens when questioning fingers lift the lid. Even eighty years after these beautiful love-letters were written, they

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<p>are not to be handled irreverently, nor read without a softening of the heart toward one who said that his name was "written in water." Somewhere, doubtless, is the small yellowed packet, the faded pages of the letters creased with much folding, for a love-letter is as nearly immortal as earthly things may be, and these, wherein the soul of a poet is laid bare, still live by their own divine right.</p> <p>"My dearest Lady," the first letter begins. "I am glad I had not an opportunity of sending off a letter which I wrote for you on Tuesday night—'t was too much like one out of Rousseau's <i>Héloïse</i>. I am more reasonable this morning. The morning is the only proper time for me to write to a beautiful Girl whom I love so much; for at night, when the lonely day has closed, and the lonely, silent, unmusical Chamber is waiting to receive me as into a Sepulchre, then believe me my passion gets entirely the sway, then I would not have you see those Rhapsodies which I once thought it impossible I should ever give way to, and which I have often laughed at in another, for fear you should think me either too unhappy or perhaps a little mad. I am now at a very</p>	<p>The Yellowed Packet</p>

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John Reals	<p>pleasant Cottage window looking onto a beautiful hilly country, with a glimpse of the sea; the morning is very fine. I do not know how elastic my spirit might be, what pleasure I might have in living here and breathing and wandering as free as a stag about this beautiful Coast, if the remembrance of you did not weigh so upon me. I have never known any unalloyed Happiness for many days together; the death or sickness of some one has always spoilt my hours—and now when none such troubles oppress me, it is, you must confess, very hard that another sort of pain should haunt me. Ask yourself, my love, whether you are not very cruel to have so entrammelled me, so destroyed my freedom. Will you confess this in the Letter you must write immediately and do all you can to console me in it—make it rich as a draught of poppies to intoxicate me—write the softest words and kiss them, that I may at least touch my lips where yours have been. For myself I know not how to express my devotion to so fair a form: I want a brighter word than bright, a fairer word than fair. I almost wish we were butterflies and lived but three summer days—three such days</p>

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<p>with you I could fill with more delight than fifty common years could ever contain."</p> <p>She must have sent him the "draught of poppies," written softest words and kissed them, for her answer sent her poet-lover into ecstasies.</p> <p>"Your Letter gave me more delight than anything in the world but yourself could do; indeed, I am almost astonished that any absent one should have that luxurious power over my senses which I feel. Even when I am not thinking of you I receive your influence and a tenderer nature stealing upon me. . . I never knew before what such a love as you have made me feel, was; I did not believe in it; my fancy was afraid of it, lest it should burn me up. . . . Why may I not speak of your Beauty, since without that I could never have loved you —I cannot conceive any beginning of such love as I have for you but Beauty. There may be a sort of love for which, without the least sneer at it, I have the highest respect and can admire it in others; but it has not the richness, the bloom, the full form, the enchantment of love after my own heart. So let me speak of your Beauty,</p>	<p>The Draught of Poppies</p>

John
Keats

though to my own endangering; if you could be so cruel to me as to try elsewhere its Power."

Is Love truly blind, or does it bring a finer sight? This is not at all in accord with features which lack sentiment, nostrils which are painful, bad-ish hands, and tolerable feet—with ignorance and monstrous behaviour—in short, a Minx.

"You cannot conceive how I ache to be with you; how I would die for one hour—for what is in the world? I say you cannot conceive; it is impossible you should look with such eyes upon me as I have upon you; it cannot be. . . . If you should ever feel for Man at the first sight what I did for you, I am lost. . . . You are, I love you; all I can bring you is a swooning admiration of your Beauty. . . . You absorb me in spite of myself—you alone. . . . I have two luxuries to brood over in my walks, your Loveliness and the hour of my death. Oh, that I could have possession of them both in the same minute. I hate the world; it batters too much the wings of my self-will, and would I could take a sweet poison from your lips to send me out of it. . . . I will imagine

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<p>you Venus to-night and pray, pray, pray to your star like a Heathen."</p> <p>Variably, indeed, the love-star shone for him. His Fanny must have reproached him for too much tenderness, since the next letter is entirely different.</p> <p>"You say you must not have any more such letters as the last: I'll try that you shall not by running obstinate the other way."</p> <p>The ensuing letter continues in the same vein:</p> <p>"Believe in the first Letters I wrote you: I assure you I felt as I wrote—I could not write so now. The thousand images I have had pass through my brain—my uneasy spirits, my unguessed fate—all spread as a veil between me and you. Remember I have had no idle leisure to brood over you—'t is well perhaps I have not. . . . This Page as my eye skims over it I see is excessively unloverlike and ungallant—I cannot help it—I am no officer in yawning quarters; no Parson-Romeo. My Mind is heaped to the full; stuffed like a cricket ball—if I strive to fill it more it would burst. I know the generality of women would hate me for this: that I should</p>	<p>The Star of Venus</p>

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have so unsoftened, so hard a mind as to forget them; forget the brightest realities for the dull imagination of my own Brain. But I conjure you to give it a fair thinking; and ask yourself whether 't is not better to explain my feelings to you, than write artificial Passion."

Had not Miss Brawne thoroughly understood his passing pique and unusual absorption in his work, surely she would not have kept this letter, since a great deal of it is, as he says, "unloverlike."

The next one is written from London, whither he has been brought by a letter from his brother George. "I love you too much to venture to Hampstead," he writes. "I feel it is not paying a visit but venturing into a fire."

None the less, he went, as is the way of man. After their separation, he resumed his letters in the old strain.

"I am living to-day in yesterday; I was in a complete fascination all day. I feel myself at your mercy. Write me ever so few lines and tell me you will never forever be less kind to me than yesterday. You dazzled me. There is nothing in the world so bright and

delicate. . . . When shall we pass a day alone? I have had a thousand kisses, for which with my whole soul I thank love—but if you should deny me the thousand and first, 't would put me to the proof how great a misery I could live through."

And, once more:

"My love has made me selfish. I cannot exist without you. I am forgetful of everything but seeing you again—my Life seems to stop there—I see no farther. . . . I have been astonished that Men could die Martyrs for religion—I have shuddered at it. I shudder no more—I could be martyred for my Religion—Love is my religion—I could die for that. I could die for you. My Creed is Love and you are its only tenet. You have ravished me away by a Power I cannot resist; and yet I could resist till I saw you; and even since I have seen you I have endeavoured often to reason against the reasons for my love. I can do that no more—the pain would be too great. My love is selfish. I cannot breathe without you."

After this, he wrote to her to say that he thought seriously of coming to live at Hamp-

My Creed
Is Love

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but ourselves a matter of necessity, I do not think I could bear any approach of a thought of losing you. I slept well last night but cannot say that I improve very fast. I shall expect you to-morrow, for it is certainly better that I should see you seldom. Let me have your good night."

Over and over again comes that pathetic plea: "Send me your good night—let me have your good night!" Only those two words upon a scrap of paper to lie beneath his pillow—poor comfort, this, for a fever of love and pain. Pitifully, too, comes this cry: "How illness stands as a barrier betwixt me and you!"

Farther on, there are the merest hints of resignation to the inevitable.

"I will not indulge or pain myself by complaining of my long separation from you. God alone knows whether I am destined to taste of happiness with you; at all events I myself know this much, that I consider it no mean happiness to have loved you thus far—if it is to be no farther I shall not be unthankful—if I am to recover, the day of my recovery shall see me by your side, from which nothing shall separate me."

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<p>In a later note, he says:</p> <p>"I continue much the same as usual, I think a little better. My spirits are better also, and consequently I am more resigned to my confinement. I dare not think of you much or write much to you."</p> <p>His illness continued, with deceptive rallies which sank constantly into deeper relapse. He learned to take pleasure in small things—the glimpse of his love at a window, a gift of oranges or jam, a golden moment in which she passed his door. About this time she gave him a ring, which never left his finger and was buried with him.</p> <p>"It is like a sacred Chalice," he wrote; "once consecrated and ever consecrate. I shall kiss your name and mine where your lips have been."</p> <p>Watchfulness stole into his love for her, and he pleaded with her not to go out without her "duffle grey," and not to "stop so long in the cold." Helpless as he was, and racked with pain, he cautioned her not to leave her window open too long, lest she, then in perfect health, should suffer for her imprudence. And</p>	<p>Like a Sacred Chalice</p>

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as his bodily strength failed, the passion of his soul waxed strong.

"I love you ever and ever and without reserve. The more I have known, the more have I loved. . . . Can I help it? You are always new. The last of your kisses was ever the sweetest, the last smile the brightest, the last moment the gracefulest. When you passed my window home yesterday, I was filled with as much admiration as if I had then seen you for the first time. . . . Even if you did not love me, I could not help an entire devotion to you; how much more deeply then must I feel for you knowing you love me! . . . Good-bye, my love, my dear love, my beauty—love me forever."

He became jealous of his friend, Charles Brown, and apparently without reason. Fanny was true until the last, but, being young and full of high spirits, her womanly fondness for admiration may have led her a little too far. At any rate, there was a brief estrangement between Keats and his lifelong friend.

He had always been afraid that some one would take her from him, as is shown in the poem *To Fanny*.

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<p> " Who now with greedy looks eats up my feast ? Whose stare outfaces now my silver moon ? Ah, keep that hand unravished at the least; Let, let the amorous burn— But, prythee, do not turn The current of your heart from me so soon, Oh, save, in charity, The quickest pulse for me! </p> <p> " Save it for me, sweet love! though music breathe Voluptuous visions into the warm air, Though swimming through the dance's dangerous wreath ; Be like an April day, Smiling and cold and gay, A temperate lily, temperate as fair; Then, Heaven there will be A warmer June for me." </p> <p>And, again:</p> <p> " Yourself—your soul—in pity give me all, Withhold no atom's atom, or I die! " </p> <p> He recovered sufficiently to go about again and to resume his work in some measure, but was soon taken violently ill. Leigh Hunt brought him into his home and took care of him, but, weak as he was, the separation from his Fanny wellnigh broke his heart. A note from her, through the misconduct of a servant, </p>	<p>Leigh Hunt</p>

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was delivered to him opened and two days late. This so affected him that he left the Hunts, intending to go back to his old lodgings. But the Brawnes took him into their home, instead, and Fanny had the precious privilege of ministering to the man she loved.

His physician, knowing that he could not live through an English winter, ordered him to Italy. His friend, Severn, the painter, accompanied him, giving up, for the time being, his own work and unusually brilliant prospects.

The voyage did him good, temporarily, and on board ship he wrote what was destined to be his last poem—an exquisite swan song, pencilled on a blank leaf in the folio of Shakespeare which his friend Reynolds had given him.

“Bright star, would I were steadfast as thou art,
Not in lone splendour hung aloft the night
And watching, with eternal lids apart,
Like nature’s patient, sleepless Eremite,
The moving waters at their priestlike task
Of cold ablution round earth’s human shores,
Or gazing on the new soft-fallen mask
Of snow upon the mountains and the moors—

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No—yet still steadfast, still unchangeable,
Pillowed upon my fair love's ripening breast,
To feel forever its soft fall and swell,
Awake forever in a sweet unrest,
Still, still to hear her tender-taken breath,
And so live ever—or else swoon to death."

The
Landing
at Naples

Yet, after landing at Naples, his anguished heart broke itself anew upon the unrelenting rock of his doom. "I can bear to die," he wrote to Brown; "I cannot bear to leave her. . . . O God! God! God! . . . Oh, Brown, I have coals of fire in my breast! It surprises me that the human heart is capable of so much misery."

From Italy, he did not write to her at all. His last letter to her was sent a little while before he sailed, and closes thus:

"The world is too brutal for me—I am glad there is such a thing as the grave—I am sure I shall never have any rest till I get there. . . . I wish I was either in your arms full of faith or that a Thunderbolt would strike me. God bless you!"

One letter was written from Italy to Mrs. Brawne. In it he says:

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"I would always wish you to think me a little worse than I really am; not being of a sanguine disposition, I am likely to succeed. If I do not recover, your regret will be softened—if I do, your pleasure will be doubled. I dare not fix my mind upon Fanny, I have not dared to think of her. The only comfort I have had in that way has been in thinking for hours together of having the knife she gave me put in a silver case—the hair in a locket—and the Pocket Book in a gold net. Show her this. I dare say no more. . . . My love again to Fanny."

And, forming an eloquent postscript to this letter, are the words: "Good-bye, Fanny! God bless you!"

After this, he lingered for nearly four months, steadily growing worse. Severn, with beautiful devotion, was constantly at his bedside, watching him often from sunset until daybreak. At times Severn would fall asleep in his chair and the candle would burn out, leaving the room in total darkness. Once Severn fixed a cotton thread between the end of the burning candle and the wick of a new one. When the light travelled up the thread, Keats woke his